

100 Questions

About

TIBET

- History
- Population
- Human Rights
- The Dalai Lama
- Religion
- Culture
- Autonomy
- Economy
- People's Livelihood
- The Lhasa Riots

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100 Questions About Tibet

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100 Questions About Tibet

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Publisher's Note

Using a question-and-answer format, this booklet aims at answering the many queries people have raised about Tibet in recent years.

The booklet's 100 questions are divided thematically into 10 sections. Among the subjects covered are Tibet's history, human rights in the region, the role of religion, the Lhasa riots and the attitude of the Chinese government towards the Dalai Lama.

We hope the information contained in this booklet will prove of use to all those who are concerned to know and understand the truth about Tibet.

We would like to thank the numerous government officials and scholars of Tibetan history at the Nationalities Institute under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences for their help and answers to many of the questions.

Sketch Map of Tibet Autonomous Region



CONTENTS

I. Historical Facts	1-37
1. Some Tibetans in self-exile have repeatedly claimed that Tibet and China are two different countries. What does history have to say?	1
2. Some Tibetans have argued that the Yuan emperor, Kublai Khan, and Pagba, a leading Tibetan lama of the Sagya Sect, only established the religious relationship of "the benefactor and the lama;" political subordination was not involved. Is this right?	2
3. How did the Yuan Dynasty exercise its sovereignty over Tibet?	5
4. It has been argued that the Mongolians incorporated Tibet into China by conquest in a manner not too dissimilar to Britain's occupation of India and Burma. What do you think of the claim that just as India cannot now regard Burma as part of its territory, so China cannot claim sovereignty over Tibet?	6
5. Did the Ming and Qing dynasties continue to exercise the sovereignty over Tibet established by the Yuan Dynasty?	9
6. Can you outline the origins of the Dalai Lama and the Bainqen Erdini? Did the establishment of these positions have anything to do with the Chinese central government?	12
7. Are there any historical documents which provide evidence that Tibet is a part of China?	14
8. Why was the issue of "Tibetan independence" raised early in this century?	17
9. It has been claimed that China only has suzerainty over Tibet. Is this right?	21
10. How did Britain and the United States interfere with China's domestic affairs with regard to Tibet in the past?	23
11. What are the views of foreign countries on the "independence of Tibet"?	27

12. An American newspaper said that Tibet did not become part of China until 1950, and only in the late 1970s did the Carter administration officially recognize China's sovereignty over Tibet. Does this accord with history?	27
13. Under what circumstances did the PLA decide to march into Tibet?	29
14. What was the content of the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet signed between China's central government and the local government of Tibet?	31
15. What was the Dalai Lama's attitude towards this agreement?	32
16. Since peaceful liberation, what policies has the Chinese government pursued in Tibet?	33
17. What caused the 1959 rebellion in Tibet?	35
18. How did the Chinese government deal with those who participated in the March 1959 rebellion?	36
II. Human Rights	38-45
19. What were the conditions regarding human rights in Tibet before democratic reform?	38
20. What rights do the Tibetan people enjoy?	38
21. Some people have said that Tibet has several hundred prisons holding many thousands of political prisoners. Others have claimed that Tibet has 73 prisons with 80,000 prisoners. What are the facts?	39
22. Some foreign newspapers have claimed that the Chinese killed more than 1 million Tibetans. Is this true?	39
23. In 1987, two men were executed in Tibet. Were they political prisoners?	39
24. What is the true story of Geshi Luosangwangzhu, a so-called "ideological criminal" the US Congress has asked to be released?	40
25. It has been claimed that the Chinese have tried prisoners in Tibet at mass rallies, after which they were immediately killed. Is it true?	40
26. Some people have accused China of carrying out "racial segregation" and "racial discrimination" in Tibet. What is the reality?	41

27. Some people have said that Tibetans cannot act freely in Tibet, and that Tibetan cadres and children aged under 18 cannot travel abroad. Is this true?	41
28. The Dalai Lama and others say that Tibetan children have been deprived of the right to education and that Tibet has become an area of illiteracy. Is this true?	42
29. It is reported that there are serious problems of unemployment and child labour among the Tibetans. Is it true?	43
30. People at the side of the Dalai Lama also said that the hospitals in Tibet only serve the Han people. Is that true?	44
31. How long is the average life-span of the Tibetans living in Tibet? How is it compared with what it was before the peaceful liberation of Tibet?	45
32. Some people have claimed that China practised forced sterilization and the killing of infants in Tibet. Is this true?	45
III. Policies Towards the Dalai Lama	46-53
33. What policy has the central government adopted towards the Dalai Lama?	46
34. If the Dalai Lama returns, can he settle in Tibet?	47
35. What is the attitude of the Chinese government towards the Dalai Lama's visit to other countries?	48
36. What is the basic divergence of views between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government and people?	48
37. What is the Chinese government's attitude towards the "five-point proposal" put forward by the Dalai Lama in the United States during September 1987?	49
38. How does the Chinese government view the Dalai Lama's "new proposal" on Tibet he put forward in Strasbourg, France, in June 1988?	49
39. How does the Chinese government value the idea of a "greater Tibetan autonomous region" suggested by some people around the Dalai Lama?	51
40. Why doesn't China agree to apply the "one country, two systems" concept to Tibet?	51
41. Will the Chinese government permit the Tibetans who fled abroad with the Dalai Lama and have acquired foreign	

citizenships to return? If so, what formalities should they go through before their homecoming visit?	52
42. What relations does the self-exiled Dalai Lama maintain with the Bainqen Lama?	52
IV. Population	54-57
43. Has there been a decrease in the number of Tibetans since the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951?	54
44. Dalai and his followers claim that 7.5 million Hans have been emigrated to Tibet, and that Tibetans have become a minority nationality in the region. Is that true?	54
45. What is Tibetan population? How is it distributed?	55
46. How many minority nationalities are there in China?	56
47. How many minority ethnic groups are there in Tibet?	56
V. Religious Belief	58-66
48. What policies has the Chinese government adopted towards religious belief in Tibet?	58
49. Some people claim that the Chinese Communist Party has eliminated religion in Tibet. Is this true?	58
50. Did the Chinese government appropriate money for renovating monasteries in Tibet in order to attract more foreign tourists?	59
51. Are Tibetans free to take part in religious activities?	60
52. How are Tibet's monasteries administered?	61
53. Are there any professional schools for training religious workers in Tibet?	61
54. Please give a brief account of the lamasery life. Do lamas suffer many privations?	61
55. Which monasteries are famous in Tibet? And what is the situation they are in now?	62
56. When did Tibetan Buddhism come into being? How many sects does it have?	64
57. It has been reported that China will set up a "Tibetan Buddhism Guidance Committee." What will be its tasks?	66
VI. Right to Autonomy	67-74
58. What policies has the Chinese government adopted in regard to minority nationalities?	67

59. When was the Tibet Autonomous Region founded? How many autonomous regions are there in China?	69
60. As one of the autonomous regions, what rights does Tibet have?	70
61. How many decrees on self-government have been formulated by the Tibet Autonomous Region?	71
62. What is the proportion of Tibetans to Hans in the Tibet Autonomous Region's civil service?	71
63. Who were the heads of all previous governments of the Tibet Autonomous Region? Were they all Tibetans?	72
64. Who have served as the standing committee chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress? What nationality were they?	72
65. How many counties and cities does the Tibet Autonomous Region have under its jurisdiction? What are the nationalities of the county-magistrates and mayors?	72
66. Are there any other Tibet autonomous areas in China apart from the Tibet Autonomous Region?	72
67. Why are none of the first secretaries of the Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese Com- munist Party Tibetans?	73

VII. Culture and Education	75-82
68. What is the policy adopted by China regarding traditional Tibetan culture?	75
69. Some foreign newspapers have claimed that China has paid no attention to Tibet's history and culture. What are the facts?	76
70. What is the Chinese government's attitude towards traditional Tibetan literature and art?	76
71. What work has been done to protect cultural relics and historical sites in Tibet?	78
72. What is the situation of Tibetan studies in China?	79
73. What does the China Tibetan Studies Centre do? Who runs it?	80
74. It is said that traditional Tibetan medical science is very special. What has China done to develop it?	80
75. How about the use of the Tibetan language?	81

VIII. Economic Development	83-90
76. what is the status of economic development in Tibet?	83
77. What policies and assistance has the central government provided in regard to economic development in Tibet?	84
78. What advantages Tibet has for its economic development?	86
79. Are there any Sino-foreign joint ventures or solely foreign-funded projects in Tibet?	87
80. How does Tibet attempt to co-operate with foreign factories?	87
81. How do foreign people invest in Tibet?	88
82. How about Tibet's tourist resources? How do foreign people travel in Tibet?	88
83. What are the main problems Tibet faces in developing its economy?	89
84. It is reported that China has deployed nuclear weapons and dumped nuclear waste in Tibet, demaging the environment there. Is that true?	90
IX. Livelihood of the People	91-95
85. How are the living conditions in Tibet today compared with the past?	91
86. Why are the living standards of Tibetans lower than the Han people in other places?	92
87. Do the Tibetan and Han people enjoy equal payment for same work?	92
88. What customs and habits are there in Tibet?	93
89. What festivals are there in Tibet?	94
X. About the Riots In Lhasa	96-104
90. Some said that the demonstrations which occurred in Lhasa in 1987 and 1988, despite being peaceful, were forcibly suppressed. Is this true?	96
91. What caused the riots, and did it have anything to do with the Dalai clique?	97
92. Some people have said that in putting down the riots in Lhasa, the police arrested and beat people indiscriminately,	

killing quite a few. What is the truth?	98
93. Of all those arrested in the riots, how many have been set free and how many are still in prison? How well are they treated in prison? What will happen to them? How many rioters, if any, were executed?	99
94. Were any foreign tourists or reporters at the scene of the riots? If there were, were they detained, warned or deported?	100
95. How do religious leaders and the residents of Lhasa view the riots since September 1987?	100
96. Why were foreigners not allowed to travel nor foreign reporters permitted to cover news in Tibet during riots?	101
97. After the riots in Lhasa, were any leaders of the Tibet Autonomous Region dismissed or promoted? Are more soldiers or policemen to be sent to Tibet?	102
98. What counter-measures have the Tibetan authorities taken since the riots? Are the masses allowed to hold parades and demonstrations?	102
99. What is the situation in Tibet now?	103
100. Some foreign newspapers said recently that the Tibet authorities have dispatched people to temples and monasteries to throw out those lamas and nuns who participated in the riots. Is this true?	104
Appendix I: The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet	105
Appendix II: Dalai Lama's Cable to Chairman Mao Zedong	111
Appendix III: Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme on the Truth About the 1959 Rebellion	112

I. Historical Facts

1. Question: Some Tibetans in self-exile have repeatedly claimed that Tibet and China are two different countries. What does history have to say?

Answer: This argument does not conform with recorded history. It is nothing but an excuse to conduct activities aimed at splitting Tibet from China and making it into an independent state.

China is a multi-national country. The Tibetans, who have lived on the Tibetan Plateau from time immemorial, established the Tubo Kingdom in the early 7th century. It friendly co-existed with the Tang Dynasty (618-907), that governed China's central plains, for more than 200 years. By the mid-9th century, the Tubo Kingdom collapsed. In the 300 years or so that followed, Tibet was in the state of disintegration. During this period, China was also being torn apart by local feudal forces, and its central plains were ruled by various separatist local governments formed by people of different ethnic groups.

In the 13th century, the Mongolians of northern China rose in power. They founded the Mongol Khanates in 1206. For 60 years, Genghis Khan and his descendants fought, and finally destroyed the regimes of the Jin in northeast China, the Western Xia in the northwest, the Dali in the southwest and the Southern Song Dynasty south of the Changjiang (Yangtze) River to unify China and found the Yuan Dynasty in 1271. Various political

forces in Tibet had successively pledged allegiance with the Mongol Khanates as early as the 1240s. After the founding of the Yuan Dynasty, Tibet immediately became an administrative region under the control of the Yuan central government.

In the following 700 years, Tibet remained under the jurisdiction of China's central governments. Even when the imperialists invaded China, planning to separate Tibet from the rest of the country, the central governments' subordination of Tibet remained unchanged.

2. Q: Some Tibetans have argued that the Yuan emperor, Kublai Khan, and Pagba, a leading Tibetan lama of the Sagya Sect, only established the religious relationship of "the benefactor and the lama;" political subordination was not involved. Is this right?

A: This argument absolutely runs in the face of recorded history. As is known to all, in the early 13th century the Mongolians rose and became the dominant force to the south and north of the large desert. In 1206, Genghis Khan united the various Mongolian tribes under his leadership. He then mounted a western expedition, sweeping across much of Asia and Europe. After his return, he launched a series of attacks against the feudal regimes of northern China. As a result, the Western Xia fell into Mongolian hands in 1227 and the Jin were defeated in 1234. The Tibetan areas, including parts of today's Gansu and Qinghai provinces, which had previously belonged to the Jin and the Xia, all fell under the jurisdiction of the Mongolian court. Because the Mongolians wanted both to consolidate their western front and make preparations to vanquish the Southern Song Dynasty, they attached great importance to the strategic position of Tibet.

In 1239, Go Tan, a Mongolian military official

stationed in Liangzhou (now Wuwei in Gansu Province), dispatched his senior general Dorta Napo to Tibet in order to gather military intelligence and information about the area's political and religious conditions. In view of the existence of different local forces in Tibet, the senior general suggested to Go Tan that he appoint Sapan Kongka Gyaincain, a Sagya Sect leader, to help the Mongolians govern Tibet.

In 1244, at the written invitation of Go Tan and, after discussion with other political forces in Tibet, Sapan went with his two nephews, Pagba and Qagna Doje, to Liangzhou. After a series of negotiations, the two leaders decided that Sapan would inform the Tibetan religious and secular leaders of Tibet's submission to Mongolians. In an open letter, he urged all religious leaders to surrender. The letter stated that the administration of Tibet would be conducted by both a Mongolian representative and the Sagya Sect leader. It also asked local chiefs to make a detailed list of their officials, the population under their jurisdiction, and the tributes they would offer. Three copies of this list should be made: one for the local chief concerned, one sent to Go Tan in Liangzhou and one to Sagya. From this time on, the era in which Tibet was torn apart by internal strife came to an end, to be replaced by the supreme authority of the Mongol Khanates.

In November 1251, Sapan died in Liangzhou. His nephew, Pagba, was appointed as his successor. Pagba had a long established relation with Kublai, the founding emperor of the Yuan Dynasty. Before the death of Sapan, Pagba had been to Liupan Mountain to meet Kublai on behalf of his old and sick uncle. At that time, Kublai, then the general commander of Mongolian troops, was preparing to attack the Dali State in nowadays western Yunnan Province. He planned to march across Gansu,

Qinghai and Tibet, and so outflank the armed forces of the Southern Song Dynasty. Kublai was pleased to meet Pagba, offering him the title of "great master." In 1253, on his way back to Tibet, Pagba again met Kublai, and reaffirmed his loyalty.

After Kublai's accession to the throne in 1260, Pagba was rapidly promoted. Kublai Khan granted him the title of "State Tutor" and gave him a jade seal to symbolize his powers. In 1264, Kublai Khan established the *Zongzhiyuan* (later renamed *Xuangzhengyuan*) to handle Buddhist affairs across his empire, including the government and religious affairs of Tibet. He appointed Pagba to head the organization. In 1270, in recognition of Pagba's merits, Kublai Khan granted him the titles of "Imperial Tutor" and "Great Treasure Master Preacher of Buddhism."

At the Yuan court, Kublai Khan always regarded Pagba as his subject. Pagba remained loyal to the court. In 1265, he returned to Sagya with instruction from Kublai Khan to establish Tibetan administrative offices. With the approval of Kublai Khan, he nominated Sakya Sampo as the first *benqin*, title of official charged with the responsibility to oversee Tibet's administrative affairs.

These historical facts indicate that the relationship between Kublai Khan and Pagba was primarily one of political subordination, i.e., between an emperor and his subject. It is true that Kublai Khan had clearly pointed out that he and Pagba had a dual relationship: in addition to the the relation of political subordination, there existed the relation of "benefactor and beneficiary." Pagba always showed his respect to the sovereign, strictly maintaining official etiquette. During their talks, Pagba would normally take the right-hand seat, with one less cushion than on Kublai Khan's chair. Only when he listened to Pagba's preaching would Kublai Khan exchange positions.

But to argue that Kublai Khan and Pagba had just a relationship of "benefactor and lama" is simply untrue.

3. Q: How did the Yuan Dynasty exercise its sovereignty over Tibet?

A: When Tibet was incorporated into China, the central government of the Yuan Dynasty worked out a series of measures to administer the region.

First of all, Kublai Khan made Tibet a fief for his seventh son, Prince Xiping. From then on, it was passed on to his descendants.

Second, the Yuan Dynasty dispatched officials to undertake a series of censuses in Tibet so as to determine both the kind and amount of tribute which should be paid. Also on the basis of the censuses, officials were sent to levy taxes. These two measures, the censuses and the tribute system, were the major ways in which the Yuan Dynasty exercised its sovereignty over Tibet.

Kublai Khan also appointed officials to head Tibet's *wanhu* (10,000 household) offices with powers to determine how much tribute should be paid from each *wanhu*.

Third, the Yuan central government founded the *Zongzhiyuan* in 1264 to handle both Buddhist affairs across the whole of China and Tibet's military, administrative and religious affairs. In 1288, this body was renamed the *Xuanzhengyuan*. It had the right to nominate officials, which then had to be approved by the emperor. It also could report directly on its affairs to the emperor. Both its officials and those working in all other administrative offices in Tibet were selected from Tibet secular and religious upper classes.

Fourth, the Yuan Dynasty set up three Pacification Commissioner's offices in Dbus, Gtsang and nowadays Ngari. The two marshals in Dbus and Gtsang led gar-

risons of Mongolian troops, and another two marshals were appointed to handle military affairs in the Ngari border area.

Fifth, to overcome the problems of communication, the Yuan officials set up 27 courier stations along the routes from Qinghai to Tibet in 1260. Board and lodging was provided for official couriers. Later, military posts were built to help troops move in and out of the region. The courier stations linked Qinghai Province with Sagya and the frontier area of Ngari. These helped consolidate the central government's links with Tibet, and strengthened economic and cultural exchanges between the hinterland and the Tibetan inhabited areas.

Sixth, all high-ranking Tibetan officials, including the heads of the *wanhus* and some of the *qianhus* (meaning 1,000 households), were appointed by the *Xuanzhengyuan* or the imperial tutor, subject to approval by the emperor. These officials were chosen from Tibet's religious and secular upper classes.

Kublai Khan appointed Pagba as the first imperial tutor. From then on, the Yuan Dynasty continued to install Tibetan Buddhists in this position. The post was not hereditary.

The Yuan central government held the power to execute any officials who disobeyed or rebelled against it. Disputes between the *wanhus* or over inheritances could be submitted to a higher authority. If they still could not be resolved, then an appeal could be made to the Yuan emperor for a final adjudication.

In sum, the Yuan Dynasty adopted a series of special measures to govern Tibet, which was always regarded as one of its provinces and thus answerable to the central government.

4. Q: It has been argued that the Mongolians

Incorporated Tibet into China by conquest in a manner not too dissimilar to Britain's occupation of India and Burma. What do you think of the claim that just as India cannot now regard Burma as part of its territory, so China cannot claim sovereignty over Tibet?

A: This argument is utterly groundless, and those who raise it either are ignorant of China's history or have ulterior motives.

As is known by all, China has been a multi-national country since ancient times. Over the past several thousand years, many nationalities have either governed the country or established separatist regimes. As a result, today's China is a product of many different peoples—it is a mistake to believe (as many foreigners with little knowledge of our history do) that China means the Han Nationality, or that the Han Nationality means China. To do so is to be led into the mistaken belief that the regimes established by China's ethnic minorities are "foreign countries."

During the three centuries before the establishment of the Mongol Khanates, China was torn apart by many separatist feudal regimes. The Song Dynasty (960-1279), despite being the most powerful of these, lacked the strength to unify the country and so only ruled over middle, east and southwest China. The other major local powers were the Liao (907-1125), the Western Xia (1038-1227), and the Jin (1115-1234) in the north, founded respectively by the Qidan, Xia and Nuzhen ethnic peoples.

During the 11th and 12th centuries, the tribes of the Mongol grasslands were ruled in turn by the Liao and Jin Dynasties, who conferred titles on the tribal leaders.

From ancient times, the Mongolians had been one of China's nationalities. In the early 13th century, their power expanded rapidly. Genghis Khan united the tribes

under a centralized Khanate in 1206, and then he and his successors launched a series of military expeditions against the Song Dynasty and China's other feudal regimes. The outcome was a unified country and the formation of the Yuan Dynasty in 1271.

In the process, the Mongol Khanates peacefully incorporated Tibet in 1247 after defeating the Western Xia and the Jin.

With a unified China, the Yuan Dynasty contributed greatly to the political, economic and cultural development of the nation's various nationalities—in strict contrast to the feuding that had gone on since the late years of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). To argue that the Mongolians' campaign to unify China was fundamentally the imposition of rule by a foreign power is wrong because it misses the basic point of Chinese history that China is a multi-national country. Whether it was the Mongolians, the Manchus (who founded the Qing Dynasty), or any other peoples, it has always been a case of one Chinese nationality replacing another. It is completely out of the question to claim that the Mongolians or the Manchus were outsiders who conquered China.

The British colonization of India through the 17th-19th centuries, however, was a completely different matter. It was not until 1947 that Indians won their independence. Similarly with Burma, which was first made a colony of Britain in 1885, became a province of India in 1897, and then was submitted to direct British jurisdiction in 1937. During World War II, it was occupied by the Japanese, before gaining independence in 1948.

Thus it was that two sovereign nations were first conquered by the British with armed force, then subjugated through trade, incorporated into one great unity, before again being separated and regranted their

separate nationhoods. It is not hard to see that there is nothing in common with the British war of aggression against India and Burma—states it previously had no relations with at all—and the Mongolians' war to unify China.

5. Q: Did the Ming and Qing dynasties continue to exercise the sovereignty over Tibet established by the Yuan Dynasty?

A: Yes. The Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) basically inherited the administrative arrangements of the Yuan Dynasty. It is recorded that Zhu Yuanzhang, the first Ming emperor, dispatched envoys to Tibet with an imperial edict that all the leaders of influential Tibetan Buddhist sects had to give their allegiance to the Ming imperial court. The envoys also ordered all Yuan-appointed officials to go to Nanjing to have their titles and offices reconfirmed. Many of them did so, including Changyang Sakya, leader of the Pagmo Zhuba Sect, who was widely perceived as the major power in Tibet at the time, and Namgyapatsangpo, the leader of the Sagya Sect and the last acting imperial tutor appointed by the Yuan Dynasty. When the latter arrived in Nanjing in 1373, the Ming emperor gave him the title of "state tutor" together with a jade seal of authority. The Ming court also approved the reappointment of more than 60 officials at his suggestion. In the same year, marshals were appointed to handle military affairs in the Ngari area of Tibet.

Power thus smoothly changed hands with the accession of the Ming Dynasty. At first, little was done to alter the administrative machinery established by the Yuan Dynasty, but subsequently several positions were upgraded. Six new titles were invented, including the "Great Treasure Prince of Dharma," the "Great Vehicle Prince of Dharma" and the "Great Mercy Prince of Dharma."

These titles were all bestowed upon high ranking lamas, who, together with local officials, governed Tibet and made great contributions to the unification of China.

Tibet's incorporation into the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) was equally as smooth and voluntary as its acceptance of Ming rule. The Qing Dynasty was founded by the Manchus of northeast China in 1636. They superseded by then corrupt Ming Dynasty in 1644 and moved the capital to Beijing, where Emperor Shunzhi ascended to the throne.

Around the same time, Tibet had witnessed the rise of the Gelug (Yellow) Sect. In 1642, the fifth Dalai Lama, Losang Gyaco, sent envoys to establish relations and pay homage to the Qing court in Shengjing (now Shenyang). Emperor Shunzhi made recognition of Lamaism one of his basic policies.

When an envoy dispatched by a Buddhist prince, whose title was conferred by the Ming Court, arrived in Beijing in 1648, the Qing emperor granted the prince the title of "state tutor." He then returned to Tibet with an imperial edict which stated: "In view of the fact that Tibetans have a long respected Buddhist religion and that Tibet has always submitted to China, I will immediately reconfirm the titles and offices conferred upon Tibetan officials by the Ming court provided they come to the Qing court with the appropriate imperial edicts, mandates and official seals."

Clearly Tibet's accession to the rule of China's central government has long been standard practice.

In later years, the Qing Dynasty strengthened its administrative grip on Tibet. In 1793, it formulated the 29-article Regulations Concerning the Administration of Tibet to establish clearly how the politics, economy, foreign affairs, religion and military affairs should be managed. Its major points were:

— The high commissioners dispatched to Tibet by the central government, the Dalai Lama and Bainqen Erdini were equals and were charged with handling local government affairs through consultation. Officials below the rank of *kaloon* and Living Buddhas were subordinate to the high commissioners;

— When a new *kaloon* was chosen, two candidates had to be nominated by both the high commissioners and the Dalai Lama before being finally appointed by the emperor.

— The high commissioners had exclusive authority over foreign affairs. *Kaloons* were forbidden to maintain correspondence contact with foreign countries. All correspondence from other nations to the *kaloons* had to be submitted to the high commissioners and the Dalai for examination.

— All foreign traders to Tibet had to perform the necessary formalities. A list of foreign traders to Tibet should be handed to the high commissioners.

— The reincarnation of a new Dalai Lama, Bainqen Erdini, Living Buddha or Hutukotu should be decided by drawing slips from a gold urn under the supervision of high commissioners, and approved by the emperor.

— All relatives of a Dalai Lama or Bainqen Erdini were proscribed from participating in political affairs. After the death of a Dalai Lama, or Bainqen, proper arrangements should be made for them according to their skills.

— The local regular army was to be 3,000 men strong. Every 500 soldiers were put under the command of a *dapon*. Under the *dapon* were the *rupon* military officers, and beneath them were the *gyapon* and *dingpon*. Military officers below the status of *dapon* were to be chosen from the ranks of competent young soldiers by the high commissioners and the Dalai Lama. The *dapon* had to be appointed by the emperor.

— *Kampus* (the abbots of large monasteries) should be appointed by the Dalai Lama, the high commissioner and the Hutuktu after consultation. The Dalai Lama alone had the right to appoint the *kampus* of the smaller monasteries.

The ordinance also contained provisions on the Dalai and Bainquen's revenues and expenditures, and on taxes, levies, arms of the local military force, the corvee services, border administration and criminal sentences.

6. Q: Can you outline the origins of the Dalai Lama and the Bainquen Erdini? Did the establishment of these positions have anything to do with the Chinese central government?

A: These two hereditary positions are descended from disciples of Tsong-kha-pa, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism's Gelug (Yellow) Sect.

The word “Dalai” first appeared in the Ming Dynasty. In 1578, Altan Khan of the Tumet tribe of the Mongols in Qinghai invited Sonam Gyatso, leader of Tibetan Buddhism's Yellow Sect, to preach in Qinghai. The two of them respected each other politically and exchanged honorific titles. Altan Khan named Sonam Gyatso “Dalai Lama,” which was preceded by the complex wording meaning “omniscience and great authority.” It should be noted this was a private matter without any political or legal implications.

At that time, the Ming government had appointed Altan Khan the Prince Shunyi. Because of this, Sonam Gyatso asked Altan Khan to request the Ming emperor for a title on his behalf. Simultaneously he wrote directly to the Ming Dynasty's Prime Minister Zhang Juzheng. Emperor Wanli acceded to this request and conferred on him a title which included the word “Dalai.”

In 1653 the fifth Dalai was invited by the Qing

emperor to Beijing. Emperor Shunzhi formally titled him "Dalai Lama," and granted him a gold seal engraved in Chinese, Manchu and Mongolian as sign of authority. Thus the political and legal title "Dalai Lama" was born.

To better manage Tibet, the Qing Dynasty's central government ordered the seventh Dalai Lama to take charge of the region's administration in 1751. It is evident, therefore, that both the title and the political and religious powers of Dalai Lama were granted by China's central government.

The word "Bainqen" first appeared in 1645, when the Mongolian chieftain Gushri Khan bestowed it upon the fourth Bainqen. The full title was "Bainqen Bogto," with *Bainqen* coming from Tibetan "master scholar," and *Bogto* meaning "wise and brave man" in Mongolian.

In 1713, the Qing Emperor Kangxi changed the title for the fifth Bainqen Lozong-Yiehsing. The imperial order ran: "In accordance with the Dalai conferment, we add the title 'Bainqen Erdini', who is also given a gold seal and a gilted album." "Erdini" means "brightness" in Mongolian. Like the seal for Dalai Lama, the seal for Bainqen Erdini was also engraved in Chinese, Manchu and Mongolian. Since then, it has been the established practice for all Bainqens to have their title conferred by China's central government.

Both the titles of Dalai and Bainqen have been handed down through a reincarnation system. This practice began with the third Dalai and the fourth Bainqen. Since the fifth Dalai and Bainqen, every new holder of these titles had had to be ratified by the central government.

In 1792, the Qing Dynasty Emperor Qianlong decided to adopt a new reincarnation system of "drawing lots from a gold urn." The general procedure was as follow: The names of "soul boys" selected from every

district were written on ivory tags, which were sealed in a gold urn. The commissioners of the Qing court to Tibet shook the urn before a group of Tibet's religious leaders, opened it and drew a name-tag at random. The chosen child then had to await ratification from the imperial court.

Once ratified, the new Dalai Lama or Bainqen could be officially instated through a ceremony, presided over by the commissioners, known as "sitting on the bed."

Although some new Dalai Lamas and Bainqens have been selected in other ways than through the drawing of lots, their names always had to be submitted to the central government for ratification before they could assume their positions. During the last century or more, all Dalai Lamas, including the current incumbent, have been officially installed and ratified in this way.

This procedure makes it clear that the conferment of the titles of Dalai and Bainqen have always been subject to the political approvement of China's central government.

7. Q: Are there any historical documents which provide evidence that Tibet is a part of China?

A: There are many such historical documents, some in Chinese and some in Tibetan. They include:

Mkhas Povi Dgax Ston (A Feast for Wise Men). This was written in 1564 in Tibetan. It states that before Mongolian troops entered Tibet, the 11 local independent groups controlling the region at that time had thrown their lot in with the Mongolian court on their own initiative.

Bod Gyi Rgyal Rabs Dpyid Gyi Rgyal Movi Glu Dbyand (Records of Tibetan Kings), a book written by the fifth Dalai Lama. It states that those who offered allegiance to the Mongolians effectively handed owner-

ship of their land to the Mongolian imperial court. The book gives the example of Hulahu, who passed his vast manor to a former Tibetan trustee in the Mongolian imperial court. It is also stated that many other similar actions took place.

So Skya Gdung Rabs (Lineage of the Sagya Sect). This famous work of Tibetan literature was finished in 1629. It gives a detailed account of how Tibet came under the jurisdiction of China's central government. It records that in 1244, the Mongolian Prince Go Tan sent Dorts Napo to Tibet, and invited the Sagya Sect chieftain Sapan to Liangzhou (now Wuwei in Gansu Province) to discuss the incorporation of Tibet into the Mongolian empire. The book notes that Sapan and Go Tan agreed conditions in 1247, and that Sapan then sent a letter (whose contents are recorded in the book) to Tibet notifying all Tibetans of the agreement. Since then, Tibet has been an integral part of China.

Rgya Bod Yig Tshang Chen Po (Records of Han and Tibetan History). This book, written in 1434 in Tibetan, is a detailed account of the Yuan imperial court's policies towards Tibet. It notes that the Yuan central government treated Tibet as one of its 11 provinces. The central imperial government set up three Pacification Commissioner's Offices at Dbus, Gtsang and Ngari in Tibet and established 13 *wankus* to undertake a census. In addition, courier stations and military posts were set up, various officials were appointed and military forces were sent to Tibet.

Other Tibetan records of the region's links with China's central governments include: *Deb Ther Sngon Po* (Blue Annals), *Sa Skya Gong Ma Inga Gi Gsung Vbun* (Complete Works by Five Sagya Masters) and *Sum Pa Mkhan Po Ye Shes Dpal Vbyor Gyi Gsung Vbum. Dpagbsam Ijon Bzang* (Biographical Notes of Songtsan Gambo—the Holy King).

Veritable Records of The Ming Dynasty, written in the Han language, states that former Yuan officials in Tibet successfully petitioned the Ming imperial court to retain their posts. Under its chieftain Gyanchiu Gyaincain, the Pagmo Zhuba Sect replaced the Sagya Sect as the dominant power in Tibet. Gyanchiu Gyaincain's successor was made an official of the Ming court and given the honorific title of a Buddhist prince by the Ming authorities. The records note that these two men managed Tibet affairs effectively and efficiently. These facts have also been recorded in the *Deb Ther Dnar Po Gsar Ma* (New Red Annals).

Regulations Concerning the Administration of Tibet. This 29-article document gives us a detailed description of how the Qing Dynasty's central authorities exercised sovereignty over Tibet. It clearly outlines the procedures for appointing and dismissing important officials, managing the army, and responsibilities for foreign affairs, taxation, and the ratification and installation of new Dalai Lamas and Bainqens. Combined with the orders issued by the Qing high commissioners to Tibet, census register books and other official documents preserved in China's research institutes, we have much evidence of how the Qing Dynasty ruled Tibet.

After the foundation of the Republic of China (1912-49), Tibet remained one of China's provinces. The KMT government established an administrative body in Tibet. Together with the Mongolian and Tibetan Committee's representative office in Tibet, it maintained direct communication with China's central government. The National Assembly of China and both chambers of parliament included Tibetans whose names have been preserved all along on official documents. The current 14th Dalai Lama was ratified by the Kuomintang government, and his official installation was presided

over by a representative from the central government. Both the ratification order of February 1940 and a documentary film of the "sitting in" ceremony presided over by the central government's representative Wu Zhongxin still exist intact.

8. Q: Why was the issue of "Tibetan independence" raised early this century?

A: First, we must clarify what is meant by "Tibet." In English and some other foreign languages, "Tibet" is often taken to mean the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and occasionally an even larger area. Here, we limit "Tibet" to Tibet proper.

Since the Qing Dynasty started ruling Tibet in the 17th century, relations between the Tibet local government and the Qing central authorities had been relatively smooth and successful, although there were occasional troubles. However, during the two Opium Wars of the mid-19th century, they began to break down.

In 1904, British troops invaded Tibet. At that time, the 13th Dalai Lama and his trusted followers wanted to resist, but the declining Qing government made one concession after another. It refused to give any support to the local government and forbade Tibet to use force. After being defeated, the 13th Dalai Lama retreated to the interior and was temporarily relieved of his official title. Although the Qing government quickly reinstated him, it nevertheless signed unequal treaties with Britain and paid indemnities for its military expenditure. A feeling of estrangement arose between the central government and the Tibet local government which consequently caused the relations to deteriorate further.

Even then, what the 13th Dalai Lama and his followers opposed were the high commissioner resident in Tibet, Lian Yu, and the local army commander Zhong

Yin. Their confrontations led to the Dalai Lama's fleeing to India in February 1910.

Foreign writers have often mistakenly believed this event was caused by the arrival of Zhao Erfeng's troops. In fact, Zhao, who was the commissioner in charge of frontier affairs for Sichuan and Yunnan, had himself only reached Qamdo, to where his troops retreated after only advancing as far as Gyanda. The real cause of the Dalai Lama's flight was his strained relations with Lian Yu, the high commissioner resident in Tibet. Lian had recommended that Zhong Yin, a member of the imperial family, should be sent to Tibet. He arrived with a hastily organized force of 1,000 troops. Although the troops were poorly disciplined, they were sufficient to frighten the Dalai Lama and his followers. The Dalai Lama fled in utter confusion and once again was punished by the imperial government with the removal of his official title. This further widened the rift.

In October the following year, news of the 1911 Revolution and the abdication of the Qing emperor arrived in Tibet. The region's civil and military systems were immediately plunged into confusion and a fierce struggle commenced between the republicans and the royalists. Some people advocated marching on to the interior to help the emperor, others fermented strife in Tibet, harassing the local people.

At this point, the 13th Dalai Lama sent his men back to Tibet and in 1912 expelled Lian Yu and Zhong Yin with their troops to the interior through India. With the emergence of the careerist politician Yuan Shikai at the head of the newly founded government of the Republic of China, confrontation swiftly ensued between the north and south of the country. During this time of turmoil, there was no possibility of normalizing the political relationship between Tibet and the interior.

The 1911 Revolution was a political revolution (in which all of China's nationalities participated) aimed at overthrowing the Qing Dynasty which had humiliated the nation and forfeited China's sovereignty. Tibet played its part by ending the administration of the Qing Dynasty's high commissioners resident in the region. Although many wider calls for action were made at the time, they met with the resistance and opposition of many Tibetan nobles, monks and people. Although these events have been subsequently referred to as "exclusion of the Hans" or a declaration of "Tibetan independence," neither tally with the actual facts.

The word "independence" has different meanings. In the early stage of the revolution, many provinces declared "independence." In this context, "independence" involved ending Qing Dynasty rule rather than the establishment of a new nation separate from the country as a whole. This is clearly expressed in Sun Yat-sen's declaration of January 1912 on the republicanization of the Han, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui and Tibetan nationalities when he was interim president:

"After Wuhan took the lead to revolt, several other provinces declared independence. This 'independence' meant exclusion of the Qing court through alliance with other provinces. This also applies to Mongolia and Tibet."

In October 1912 when the government of the Republic of China reconfirmed the 13th Dalai Lama's right to his title, Tibet did neither refuse to accept the decision nor demand independence.

At this point, it is worth mentioning the so-called "Mongolia-Tibet Treaty" that was much rumoured at the beginning of 1913. According to some foreign newspapers, this treaty opened with a statement that following the fall of the Qing Dynasty, Mongolia and

Tibet had declared themselves independent nations. The 13th Dalai Lama and his followers denied this rumour (as has been recorded in various books written by some foreigners), unlikely behaviour if he had really wanted independence.

Up to this time, the question of Tibet's status had remained a purely internal matter of China. But in the first year of the Republic of China (1912), The British ambassador to China attempted to interfere directly. He presented a note to Yuan Shikai on August 17 which stated that the British government would refuse to recognize the government of the Republic of China and so would not permit Chinese officials to travel there via India. In this way, he forced Yuan to appoint officials to participate the Simla Conference of 1913-14. Although the talks broke down, one of its results was to hinder the resumption of normal political relations between Tibet and the interior.

In 1919, under the influence of the national patriotic and anti-imperialist May 4th Movement, the Chinese central government dispatched a delegation to Lhasa from Gansu through Qinghai Province. At an interview with the 13th Dalai Lama, the latter said he had never established good terms with Britain, and, moreover, he had never had any intention of separating Tibet from China. However, because of the many warlord regimes in the country, the continuing domestic turmoil and foreign invasion, real unity had not been realized. This was nevertheless a short period. Given the right circumstances, Tibet would resume normal relations with the central government. This was a historical trend any force could not reverse.

On May 23, 1951, the Central Government of the People's Republic of China and Tibet's local government signed an agreement on Tibet's peaceful liberation. In

October the same year, the Dalai Lama sent a cable to Chairman Mao Zedong endorsing this agreement, supporting the People's Liberation Army entering Tibet to consolidate national defence, drive out imperialist forces from Tibet and safeguard the unification of the territory and the sovereignty of the motherland.

Even now, there are still some people who ignore this mass of evidence and try to convince others that there had existed a so-called problem of "Tibetan Independence." It has to be asked, what government across the world has ever recognized Tibet as an independent state?

9. Q: It has been claimed that China only has suzerainty over Tibet. Is this right?

A: It is said that Lord Curzon, who was viceroy of India in 1904, first used the word "suzerainty" in the restricted context of British-India government document.

The first international document which used and explained this word was a convention signed by Britain and Russia in Petersburg on August 31, 1907, titled The Convention Between Great Britain and Russia Relating to Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet.

This convention has three sections. The first dealt with the spheres of influence, special rights and interests of Britain and Russia in Persia. The second dealt with Afghanistan, and the third concerned Tibet. This section declared that the governments of Great Britain and Russia recognized China's right of suzerainty over Tibet. In the first sentence of the second article it stated, "In conformity with the admitted principle of the suzerainty of China over Tibet, Great Britain and Russia engage not to enter into negotiations with Tibet except through the intermediary of the Chinese government." It may be the only time the noun "suzerainty" was used in an international treaty concerning China's relationship with Tibet.

Britain took advantage of Russia's weakness following its defeat at the hands of the Japanese to secure a declaration conceding Britain's special interests and rights in Tibet. Because China's sovereignty over the region was an obstruction to both sides, they arbitrarily inserted the word "suzerainty" in its place. May we ask which Chinese government had ever recognized this convention, and which convention signed by the Chinese government has ever mentioned the word "suzerainty?"

In February 1910, the 13th Dalai Lama fled to India after a disagreement with the Qing high commissioners resident in Tibet. For this, the Qing imperial court punished him by removing his title. He was subsequently reinstated by the government of the Republic of China. But it is worth noting that this event happened just two years after the signing of the convention. When the British government was asked about it, it replied that it merely showed China exercised effective suzerainty over Tibet and Britain had no right to interfere.

This seems to offer us a definition of "suzerainty," but others have also been suggested later. For example, someone else stated that it was a doctrine of great flexibility, determined by how effectively a central government could exercise sovereignty over a local government. Then again, it was said that "suzerainty" concerned the autonomous rights of a local government, and it was an impossible word to define. But some people insisted that although the word "suzerainty" could not possibly have a clear definition, it should never be equated with "sovereignty."

One point is clear, the use of the word concerning Tibet was aimed at denying China's sovereignty.

China's stand on Tibet has long been clear. First, China has long exercised sovereignty, not anything else, over the region. Second, regional autonomy is purely the

internal affairs of a given country, and a sovereign state will never allow any other nation to interfere in its domestic affairs.

10. Q: How did Britain and the United States interfere with China's domestic affairs with regard to Tibet in the past?

A: Both the countries have tried to poke into China's internal affairs with regard to Tibet at different historical stages.

Britain: In the 1770s and 1780s, the East India Company twice sent representatives to Xigaze of Tibet, attempting to entice the Bainqen Lama to establish relations with them and undermine China's unification, but was refused. After the Sino-British Opium War, Britain took advantage of the Qing government's incompetence to attack Tibet's Longtu Fort. In 1890 and 1893, it forced the Qing government to sign the Anglo-Chinese Convention Relating to Sikkim and Tibet, and the Regulations Regarding Trade, Communication and Pasturage to Be Appended to the Sikkim-Tibet Convention, respectively, thus enabling Britain to occupy large areas of Tibet and open a trade mart in Yadong.

In 1904, Britain launched a full-scale military invasion of Tibet, forcing the Qing government to sign the so-called "Treaty of Lhasa." According to the treaty, another two trade posts were opened at Gyangze and Garyarsa, and China paid huge amount of military reparations to Britain.

In 1907, Britain and Russia signed a treaty in which Britain acknowledged Russia's interests in Mongolia in return for recognition of its "special rights" in Tibet. These two imperialist powers thus arbitrarily declared that China's former sovereignty over Tibet was now a mere "suzerainty."

In 1913-14, Britain forced China's newly established republican government to take part in the Simla Conference. With the goal of gaining complete control over the region and then gradually annexing the Tibetan-inhabited areas in Sichuan and other provinces, Britain deliberately put forward a plan to divide the whole region into "inner Tibet" and "outer Tibet," made a secret agreement with the pro-British Tibetan representatives and drew an arbitrary border along what has been so-called the "McMahon Line," thus occupying large tracts of Chinese territory. This scheme was rejected by the Chinese government from the very start.

After that, Britain stage-managed the "independence of Tibet" by fostering pro-British groups among Tibet's upper classes. They sowed discord between the Dalai Lama and the 9th Bainqen, forcing the latter eventually to flee to the hinterland. Britain then gave a large amount of weapons and ammunition to Tibetan troops before encouraging them to launch an invasion eastwards in an attempt to establish a "great Tibet" under British protection. In an attempt to further strengthen their hand, Britain also instigated a group of young officers, led by the commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army, Tsarong Dazang-dradul, to plot an armed coup d'état and wrest power. They were defeated.

In 1904, Britain again unsuccessfully attempted to encourage separatist elements to oppose the patriotic regent Rabchen Hutukotu.

In 1949, as the PLA was advancing across southwest China, the British and American imperialists worked hand in glove to stage a plot, trying to separate Tibet from the hinterland by expelling the KMT's agents in Lhasa under the pretext of "preventing the Communists from entering Tibet."

The United States' history of interference in Tibetan

affairs dated principally from the end of the Second World War. In 1942, the US Strategy and Intelligence Agency sent Ilia Tolstoy and others to gather information and contact Tibet's ruling clique under the guise of investigating communication lines from India to China.

In 1947, despite the opposition of the Chinese government, the United States played host for the "Shageba Mission," who travelled under the so-called "passports" of the Tibetan government.

In 1949, the United States actively supported the separatists in the Tibetan local government to oppose the PLA's entrance into Tibet, and then plotted to let Tibet join the United Nations as an independent country.

In 1950, the United States persuaded El Salvador's representatives to the United Nations to propose a motion to the General Assembly, slandering China's liberation of Tibet. However, the Chinese government's exposure of this scheme and the opposition of many UN members led to the rejection of this motion which clearly meddled in China's internal affairs.

In 1951, on the eve of the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the United States formulated a plot to kidnap the Dalai Lama from Tibet. After China's central government and the Tibet local government signed the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet, America again attempted to persuade the Dalai Lama to desert his country by offering him aid if he publicly repudiated the agreement. But these schemes have all failed because of the central government's correct policies and the opposition of the Tibetan people.

The United States, however, still did not stop its divisive activities. After 1951, the CIA continued to maintain contact with Tibetan separatists, such as Jialo Dundrub, attempting to persuade Tibetans to gather information and launch guerrilla warfare. In 1955, some

of the separatists visited the United States to meet US government officials. During the meeting, the Americans put forward a ten-year plan for rebellion in Tibet. From that time on, a large number of Tibetans have been secretly sent to Taiwan and Okinawa for training in guerilla warfare, before being sent back to Tibet to foster rebellion.

In late 1958, the CIA formulated a concrete plan for a rebellion in Tibet. It centred on a scheme to kidnap the Dalai Lama from Tibet. The large-scale rebellion in March 1959 took place under the instigation and plotting of some foreign forces, of which the CIA of the United States played a major role. When the rebellion was successfully put down, the United States continued to give secret support to the Dalai clique, who had exiled themselves to India, while continuing to air-drop weapons and materials to the separatists who had remained in Tibet and organizing them in various acts of sabotage.

In the early 1960s, after John F. Kennedy became the president, America began to curb its interference in Tibet. It was not until 1971 when President Nixon visited China and opened the way to improving Sino-American relations that the United States has halted its direct support for the Tibetan rebels. But some political forces in the United States (including a small number of Congress members) have maintained close contacts with the Dalai clique and render it political and financial support to split China's territory.

History thus reveals that Britain and the United States have interfered in Tibetan affairs. Yet all their activities have ended in failure. Any scheme aimed at "Tibetan independence," or any other scheme to separate the region from China, cannot succeed.

11. Q: What are the views of foreign countries on the “independence of Tibet”?

A: Tibet is an inseparable part of China. This has always been recognized by the world both now and in the past—even in the mid-19th century when China fell victim to imperialist aggression. For instance, in 1903 George Hamilton, the British Secretary of State for India, said that Tibet must be regarded “as a province of China.” On June 14, 1904, in his instructions to the British plenipotentiary to Russia, the British foreign secretary reiterated that Tibet was a province of the Chinese empire.

Since independence, India has repeatedly stated its respect for China’s sovereignty over Tibet. On May 15, 1954, Prime Minister Nehru declared in the Lower House of the Indian Parliament, “I am not aware that at any time during the last few hundred years, Chinese sovereignty, or if you like suzerainty, was challenged by any outside country.”

In March 1959, when a small number of reactionary elements in the local government of Tibet staged an armed rebellion, a spokesman for the US State Department declared on March 24, “The United States never regarded Tibet as an independent state.” A spokesman for the British Foreign Office also reiterated on March 31, 1959, that Britain recognized China’s sovereignty over Tibet.

12. Q: An American newspaper said that Tibet did not become part of China until 1950, and only in the late 1970s did the Carter administration officially recognize China’s sovereignty over Tibet. Does this accord with history?

A: History says No.

The fact is that from 1271, when Kublai Khan (1215-

1294) founded the Yuan Dynasty, Tibet has been an integral part of China's territory.

In the 700 years following the founding of the Yuan Dynasty, the Tibetan political and religious systems were established through the regulations of China's central government. The leaders of the local government of Tibet had to be appointed and given official seals before they could exercise their lawful powers. During the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the ties between Tibet and the central government were further strengthened. The central government introduced specific regulations on the organization and functions of the local government of Tibet. It sent two high commissioners to reside in Tibet and govern with the Dalai Lama and the Bainqen Lama.

Even after the 1840s, when China became a victim of the imperialist powers, the historical fact that Tibet was an inseparable part of China remained fundamentally unchanged. The title-granting ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama, now in self-exile, held in February 1940, was presided over by an envoy sent by the central government. The conventions signed at the conclusion of the two British incursions into Tibet in the late 19th and early 20th centuries could take effect only by referring to the central government of China in negotiations.

In 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded. In 1951, the Central People's Government and the local government of Tibet negotiated an agreement for the peaceful liberation of Tibet. Before this, the Central People's Government had already peacefully liberated Beijing, Hunan and Xinjiang through negotiations with the local governments concerned. To take the 1951 agreement as the beginning of China's sovereignty over Tibet merely reveals some people's ignorance of Chinese history.

As for the US government's attitude towards

China's sovereignty over Tibet, nothing is more convincing than its own statements scattered among its diplomatic documents. Here are two examples:

1. The transcript of a talk between the US Secretary of State John Hay and the US Ambassador to Britain Joseph Choate on June 3, 1904, in which the secretary of state instructed Choate to remind the British government that the latter had three times (in 1879, 1885, and 1890) recognized Chinese sovereignty by negotiating with the Chinese government on questions regarding Tibet and to stress that Washington regarded China held sovereignty over the region.

2. In 1943, when British diplomacy again tried to dilute the status of Tibet as part of China, the US State Department promptly told the British ambassador in Washington, "The Chinese constitution lists Tibet among areas constituting the territory of China. This Government has at no time raised a question regarding the claim." This can be seen in *US Diplomacy*, 1943, page 603.

13 Q: Under what circumstances did the PLA decide to march into Tibet?

A: In 1949, China's War of Liberation reached its final stage. All of China's inland territory except Tibet had been liberated. Some pro-imperialist elements in the local government of Tibet, in collaboration with the American and British imperialists, tried to block the PLA's advance into Tibet to complete the unification of the motherland. In July 1949, on the pretext of "preventing the Communists from entering Tibet," they demanded that the Kuomintang government withdraw all of its representatives from Tibet. This is known as the "Incident of Expelling the Hans." Meanwhile, they gave enormous publicity to the "independence of Tibet" and planned a so-called "goodwill mission" to the United

States and Britain to seek aid and support. They also expanded their armed forces and placed troops along the Jinsha River, saying that they would not allow the PLA to enter Tibet.

Such actions by the Tibetan local government aroused public indignation among people of all nationalities. Many requested that the Central People's Government send troops to liberate Tibet, drive out the imperialist forces, and put an end to the pro-imperialists' scheme to separate Tibet from the motherland. When the Bainqen Kambu Lija heard that the Tibetan local authorities planned to send a "goodwill mission" abroad, it sent a cable to the Central People's Government on behalf of the patriots in Tibet: "Tibet is part of Chinese territory. It is recognized by the whole world. All Tibetans regard themselves as members of the Chinese multi-national community. What the Lhasa authorities have done is a violation of national territorial integrity and against the will of Tibetan people. We, on behalf of the Tibetan people, request the prompt dispatch of the PLA to liberate Tibet."

Under such circumstances, the Central People's Government made the decision to strive for a peaceful liberation of Tibet. It ordered the PLA to prepare to march into Tibet. Meanwhile, through many channels, it told the Tibetan authorities to dispatch a delegation to Beijing for negotiations. Later, the Central People's Government also sent several peace missions to Lhasa to declare the government's position, with the hope that the local authorities could cut off with the imperialists and return to the multi-national family of the motherland. However, the pro-imperialist elements, headed by the Regent Tagecha still clung to their separatist stand and refused to send any representatives to negotiate for peaceful liberation. They expelled Shirob Jaltso,

commissioner of the Central People's Government, from Tibet, and exiled the Living Buddha Datse and three cadres of Han nationality to the Shannan area. In addition, the Living Buddha Geda was killed by poison in Qamdo. As a result, an armed confrontation became inevitable.

On October 7, the battle of Qamdo was fought. In 13 days, the PLA inflicted a sizable defeat on the main forces of the Tibetan army to cross the Jinsha River and liberate Qamdo, a town of strategic importance in eastern Tibet.

In the spring of 1951, Regent Tagecha stepped down and the 14th Dalai Lama took over. The Tibetan authorities sent a delegation, headed by Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, to Beijing and entered into negotiation with the delegation of the Central People's Government. After more than 20 days, the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet was signed on May 23, 1951.

14. Q: What was the content of the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet signed between China's central government and the local government of Tibet?

A: The principal contents of the 17-article document were as follows:

- The Tibetan people shall unite and drive out imperialist aggressive forces from Tibet;
- The local government of Tibet shall actively assist the People's Liberation Army to enter Tibet and consolidate national defence;
- The Tibetan people have the right to national regional autonomy;
- The central authorities shall not alter the existing political system in Tibet;
- The central authorities also will not alter the

established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama;

— The policy of freedom of religious belief shall be carried out, the religious beliefs, customs and habits shall be respected, and the monasteries shall be protected;

— Tibetan troops shall be reorganized by stages and made into a part of the national defence forces of the People's Republic of China;

— The spoken and written language and school education of the Tibetan nationality shall be developed step by step;

— Tibet's agriculture, animal husbandry, industry and commerce shall be developed step by step and the people's living standards shall be improved gradually in accordance with the actual conditions in Tibet;

— The People's Liberation Army entering Tibet shall be fair in all buying and selling and shall not arbitrarily take a single needle or thread from the people; and

— The Central People's Government shall be exclusively responsible for all external affairs in Tibet.

(The full text of this agreement can be found at the end of this book.)

15. Q: What was the Dalai Lama's attitude towards this agreement?

A: The Dalai Lama supported the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet. In his telegram to Mao Zedong, chairman of the Central People's Government, on October 24, 1951, he said that the local government of Tibet and the Tibetan people, monks and laymen alike, would unanimously support the agreement. He added, "We will actively assist the People's Liberation Army to enter Tibet and consolidate the national defence, drive out imperialist aggressive forces

from Tibet, and safeguard the unified state territory and sovereignty under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Central People's Government."

(The full text of the telegram is printed at the end of this book.)

16. Q: Since peaceful liberation, what policies has the Chinese government pursued in Tibet?

A: Since the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the Chinese government has strictly upheld the policy of equality and unity of all nationalities, the policy of freedom for religious belief, and the policy of uniting with personages in the upper classes to develop the patriotic united front, respecting national customs and habits and gradually introducing regional autonomy.

In the early days after peaceful liberation in 1950s, the central government adopted the following guiding principle: Proceeding from the reality of Tibet and bearing in mind its actual level of productive forces as well as its current political, economic and cultural situation to decide concrete policies for its development and construction; respecting the will of the Tibetan people and their religious leaders, listening to their opinions and consulting with them.

In March 1959, certain reactionary members of Tibet's upper classes staged an armed rebellion. When it was suppressed, the central government's policy was: Treating members of the ruling clique in different ways according to the fact whether they had participated the rebellion or not and buying out those who did not; and a herd owners who had not joined the rebellion which would ensure a relationship of mutual benefit with the herdsmen.

After the democratic reform, the central govern-

ment adopted in 1961 the guiding principle of steady development in Tibet. It stipulated that the agricultural co-operatives would not be established in five years, so that the recently liberated serfs could build up their strength to develop production. In a few years that followed, agriculture, animal husbandry and the handicraft industry have developed rapidly, the population increased and the general standard of living in the region markedly improved.

From 1966 to 1976, China was plunged into the chaos of the "cultural revolution." Like other places of the country, Tibet's economic development was seriously damaged, the Party's policies on nationalities, religion and the united front were all annulled, religious activities were banned and many monasteries were destroyed. The Tibetans suffered along with all the other peoples of China.

Since the "cultural revolution," the central government has led people of all nationalities to rectify the errors that were committed. Two working conferences were held to specifically discuss the question of Tibet—one in March-April 1980, and the other in the spring of 1984. As a result, a series of special flexible policies suitable to Tibet's local conditions were adopted. Among the measures adopted were the exemption of tax and the cancellation of unified agricultural produce purchasing quotas for farmers and livestock breeders. While maintaining the public ownership of the land, forests and pastures, various new management measures based on individual households have been adopted. The buying and selling of crops and animals is now principally regulated by the market with each household managing its own contracted piece of land and owning its own livestock, a policy that will remain unchanged for a long period. Major efforts

have been devoted to developing the individual and collective economy in industry and commerce. People who were wronged during the “cultural revolution” have been rehabilitated and given compensation for their losses. A large sum of funds has been put aside to restore monasteries and the people’s traditional religious activities have resumed. At the same time, the central government and China’s other provinces have increased economic and technical aid to Tibet.

17. Q: What caused the 1959 rebellion in Tibet?

A: Since the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951, Tibet’s economy and culture had made great progress. This is mainly due to the conscientious implementation of the 17-article Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet by the incoming personnel, and officers and men of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), and the state’s financial and material aid. At the same time, after many generations of oppression and exploitation, the million Tibetan serfs became increasingly conscious of their rights. Influenced by China’s vigorous socialist transformation, they strongly demanded the abolition of feudal serfdom.

The Tibetan ruling classes feared and were hostile to the demands of the Tibetan people. They cruelly persecuted the peasants and herdsmen who took part in Tibet’s construction, who accepted state loans and who had their diseases treated by doctors invited from outside. They wantonly insulted PLA soldiers and personnel in Tibet and obstructed the implementation of the agreement.

Considering the situation prevailing at that time, the central government adopted a very circumspect and restrained attitude. It decided not to conduct reforms in Tibet during the Second Five-Year Plan (1958-62), and

clearly pointed out that although Tibet's social system had to be reformed, changes would only occur when the Tibetan people and their leaders deemed it feasible. In spite of this, the reactionary clique of the Tibetan upper classes tried to perpetuate feudal serfdom. At the instigation of outside forces, they started an armed rebellion in a vain attempt to drive the PLA out of Tibet and separate the region from the motherland. This was the basic cause of the 1959 rebellion in Tibet.

It should be noted that to create a pretext for launching the rebellion, Tibet's reactionary clique spread the rumour that the Hans had tried to kidnap the Dalai Lama. To acquaint people with the truth, Vice-Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, formerly a *kaloon* of the Tibetan local government, recently wrote an article for *China Tibetan Studies* (see Appendix III).

18 Q: How did the Chinese government deal with those who participated in the March 1959 rebellion?

A: The armed rebellion launched by Tibet's reactionary clique in March 1959 was designed to preserve feudal serfdom and oppose and sabotage the implementation of the 17-article Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet. In order to safeguard the unification of the motherland and the fundamental interests of the Tibetan people, the Central People's Government ordered the PLA stationed in Tibet to put down the rebellion.

The broad masses of the Tibetan people and the patriotic members of the upper classes firmly defended the unity of the motherland and supported the PLA's suppression of the rebellion.

Those captured in the rebellion were tried and sentenced according to law. In the 1960s, a group of the

rebels with shorter sentences and a record of good behaviour were released. In 1979, with the approval of China's central government, the Tibet Autonomous Region set free all the remaining prisoners who had participated in the 1959 rebellion.

II. Human Rights

19. Q: What were the conditions regarding human rights in Tibet before democratic reform?

A: Before democratic reform, Tibet was a feudal serfdom. The entire means of production was owned by less than 5 percent of the population made up of officials, nobles and monasteries—the so-called three estate-holders. The majority of Tibetans were slaves or serfs. Regarded as private property by their owners, they were made to work day and night, sold, exchanged or mortgaged. If they disobeyed orders or did something wrong, they could be cruelly tortured or even killed. Under such conditions, most Tibetans could hardly even consider personal freedom, let alone human rights.

20. Q: What rights do the Tibetan people enjoy?

A: The Tibetans, like people of China's all nationalities, enjoy all the rights as stipulated in China's Constitution, such as administration of state affairs, economic and cultural enterprises and social affairs; and the freedom of religious belief, speech, publication, assembly, association, and demonstration.

The Tibetans also enjoy the special rights and freedoms as stipulated in China's Law on Minority Regional Autonomy, including the right to self-government or autonomy, the freedom to develop their own spoken and written language, and the freedom to keep and reform their own customs and habits.

21. Q: Some people have said that Tibet has several hundred prisons holding many thousands of political prisoners. Others have claimed that Tibet has 73 prisons with 80,000 prisoners. What are the facts?

A: Neither of these claims are true. At present, the Tibet Autonomous Region has only one prison and two reform-through-labour teams. Between them they hold some 900 prisoners. All of them are criminals who violated China's Criminal Law. All the prisoners who participated the 1959 rebellion have already been released.

22. Q: Some foreign newspapers have claimed that the Chinese killed more than 1 million Tibetans. Is this true?

A: This is a most absurd slur. If the editors of these newspapers made any attempt at all to check their so-called "facts," they would not publish such reports that harmed no one but their own reputation.

During China's first national census in 1953, the local government of Tibet, under the leadership of the Dalai Lama, put Tibet's population at 1 million. To this can be added the 270,000 people of Qamdo Prefecture which was put under Tibet's jurisdiction in 1956. If one million were killed, then there would be almost no Tibetans left. The truth, however, is just the opposite. According to the national census of 1982, Tibet's population increased to more than 1.89 million, of which the Tibetans constitute over 1.786 million, an increase of more than 500,000 on 1953.

23. Q: In 1987, two men were executed in Tibet. Were they political prisoners?

A: In September 1987, the People's Court of Tibet Autonomous Region sentenced two murderers to death

after a rigorous investigation. Neither of them was a political prisoner.

The first was called Gesang Zaxi. He had robbed and killed Bianba Renci, a citizen of Tibetan nationality on June 14, 1987. The other was Chilie Jiancan, who killed Luosang Yixi, another Tibetan, on June 7, 1987.

After these two men were sentenced to death, followers of the Dalai Lama and some Americans attempted to distort the facts by claiming their actions were politically motivated. As the trial proved, such claims are utterly false.

24. Q: What is the true story of Geshi Luosang Wangzhu, a so-called “ideological criminal” the US Congress has asked to be released?

A: First, it is necessary to point out that there is no such term as “ideological crime” in China’s Criminal Law. So there is no so-called “ideological criminal” in China.

Geshi Luosang Wangzhu, whose proper Tibetan name is Gexi Luosang Wangqiu, was a native of Amdo (Pagbag) County, Nagqu Prefecture, Tibet. On September 21, 1960, he was arrested for participating in a counter-revolutionary rebellion and was sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment. After release, he posted reactionary leaflets and concocted so-called history of Tibetan independence in 1979 and 1980, attempting to split the motherland. According to China’s Criminal Law, therefore, the man was once again arrested, sentenced and put in jail. He has died of a disease. When he was sick he was given proper medical treatment.

25. Q: It has been claimed that the Chinese have tried prisoners in Tibet at mass rallies, after which

they were immediately killed. Is it true?

A: China is an unified and independent country with a unified legal system. People's courts in Tibet at all levels try criminal cases according to the Law of Criminal Procedure and pass sentences in line with the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China. Since the end of "cultural revolution," China has strived to perfect its legal system. There have been no instances in Tibet or any other part of the country where criminals have been tried at mass rallies and then executed without being tried by a court. As for those prisoners who have been sentenced to death by the people's courts, some have been executed at mass rallies because of the serious nature of their crimes and the desire of the people to see justice done.

26. Q: Some people have accused China of carrying out "racial segregation" and "racial discrimination" in Tibet. What is the reality?

A: This just is not true. China is a multi-national country, and the Tibetans are just one of China's 56 nationalities. The Chinese Communist Party has always carried out the policy of equality between all nationalities. After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the central government showed great concern and gave much support to developing the region and improving the livelihood of its people. Their religious beliefs, customs and habits have been respected and regional autonomy fostered. Now, more than 61 percent of Tibet's government employees are Tibetans, including a great proportion of high officials. All prefectural, county and township leaders are Tibetans. Clearly, the Tibetan people are their own masters.

27. Q: Some people have said that Tibetans cannot act freely in Tibet, and that Tibetan cadres and children

aged under 18 cannot travel abroad. Is this true?

A: That isn't how things stand. Like all Chinese, Tibetans enjoy the full rights of democracy and freedom enshrined in the country's Constitution. Because of this, China welcomes foreign visitors to travel to Tibet and discover for themselves the true condition of the region.

It is also false statement to claim that Tibetan cadres and children under 18 are not allowed to go abroad. Since China implemented its reform and open policy, the number of Tibetans travelling abroad to teach or study has gradually increased. More recently, several art troupes have also visited other countries to give performances. In addition, around 1,000 Tibetan cadres and citizens have visited their relatives and friends abroad. Some of them have taken their children with them. It has to be noted, however, that because some exiles still attempt to indoctrinate young Tibetans with reactionary ideas of "Tibetan I-dependence," Tibet's local government has to take some precautions.

28. Q: The Dalai Lama and others say that Tibetan children have been deprived of the right to education and that Tibet has become an area of illiteracy. Is this true?

A: These remarks are not based on facts. The real situation is: since peaceful liberation in 1951, there have been continual efforts to develop education in Tibet. By the end of 1986, a total of 148,000 students were enrolled in schools in the autonomous region. The region now has three institutions of higher learning, 14 secondary vocational schools, 64 middle schools, and more than 2,300 elementary schools.

Tibetans make up a large proportion of the students. For example, 109,000 of the 121,000 elementary students are Tibetan; 14,200 of the 21,950 middle school students



An official notice written in Tibetan by Pagba, the first "Imperial Tutor" appointed by Kublai Khan to head the Tibetan local government in 1253 after the latter became the first emperor of the Yuan Dynasty.

乃烏思藏

怕木竹巴灌

頂太國師

闡化王阿吉

汪東劄夫

有疾不能

管事特命

爾孽拉闡

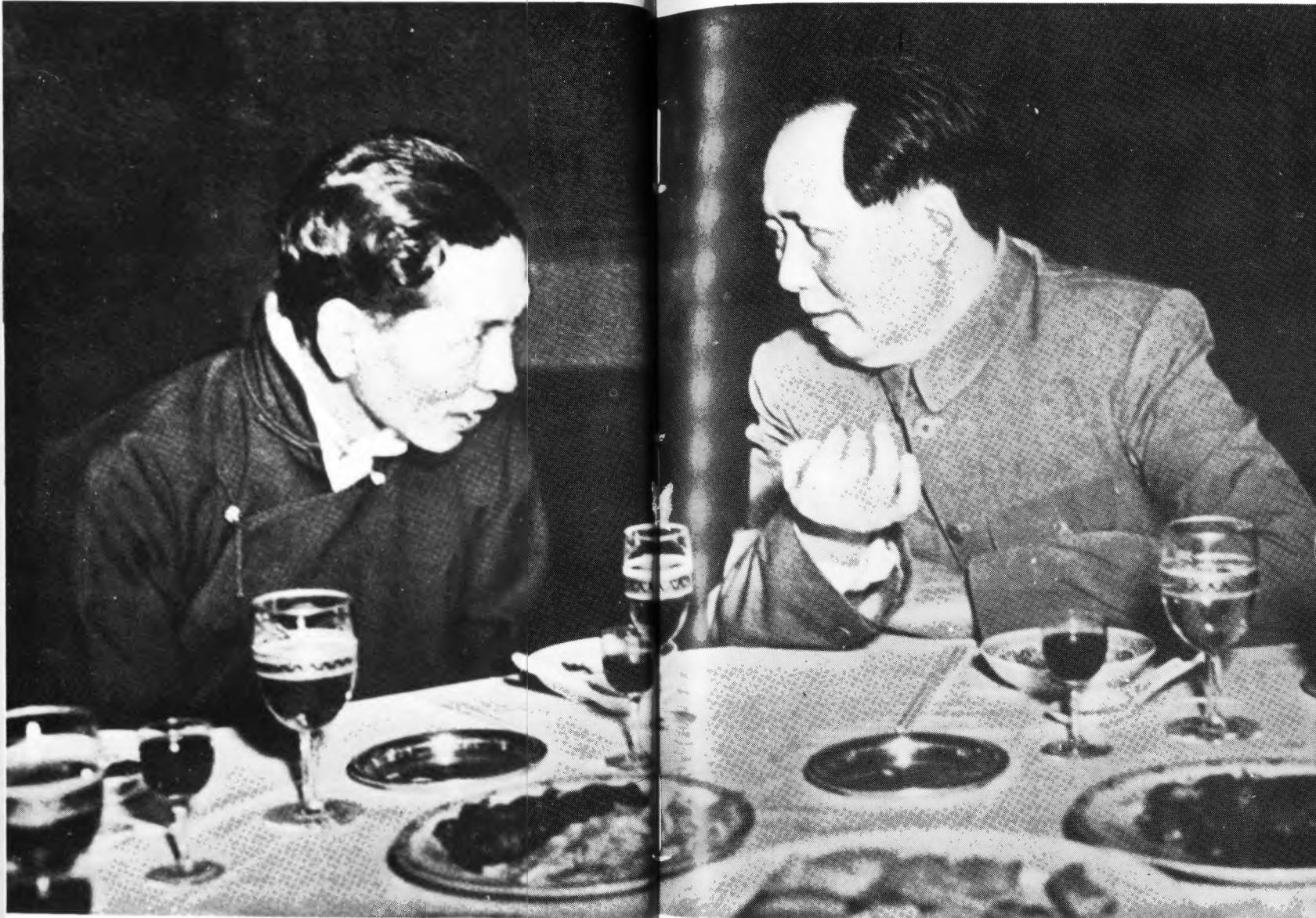
化王之職爾

An imperial edict issued by the Ming Dynasty Emperor Jiaqing in 1562 allowing a Tibetan religious prince to retain his title.

嘉靖空首書



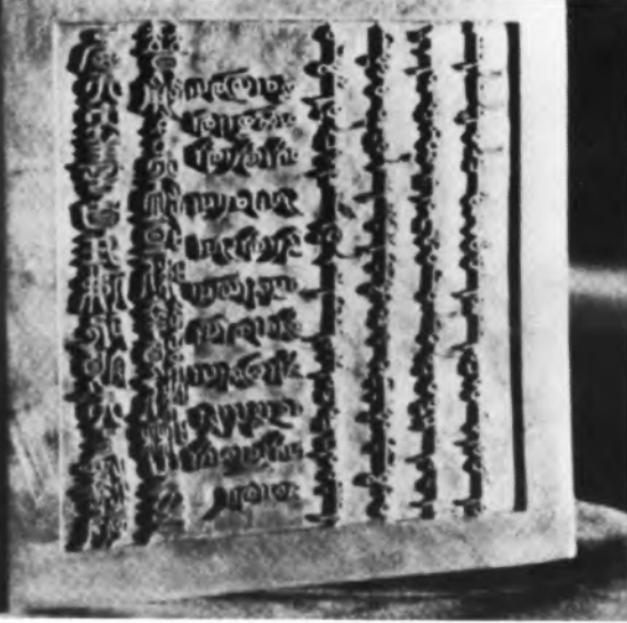
A mural in the Potala Palace depicting Losang Gyaco (left), the fifth Dalai Lama, paying homage to the Qing Emperor Shunzhi in 1652.



Mao Zedong (left), chairman of the Central People's Government, at a banquet in honour of Ngapoi Nagwang Jigme (right), chief delegate of the local government of Tibet, after the signing of the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet in 1951.

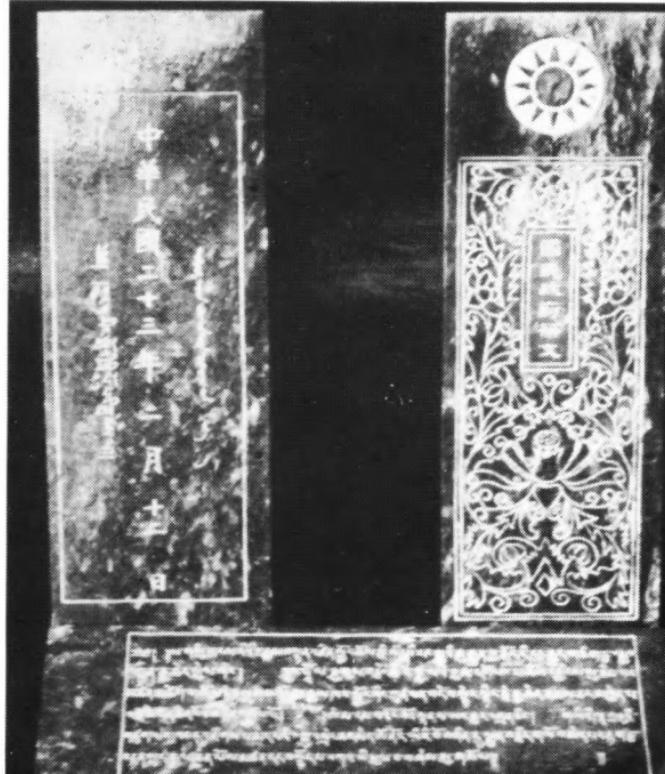


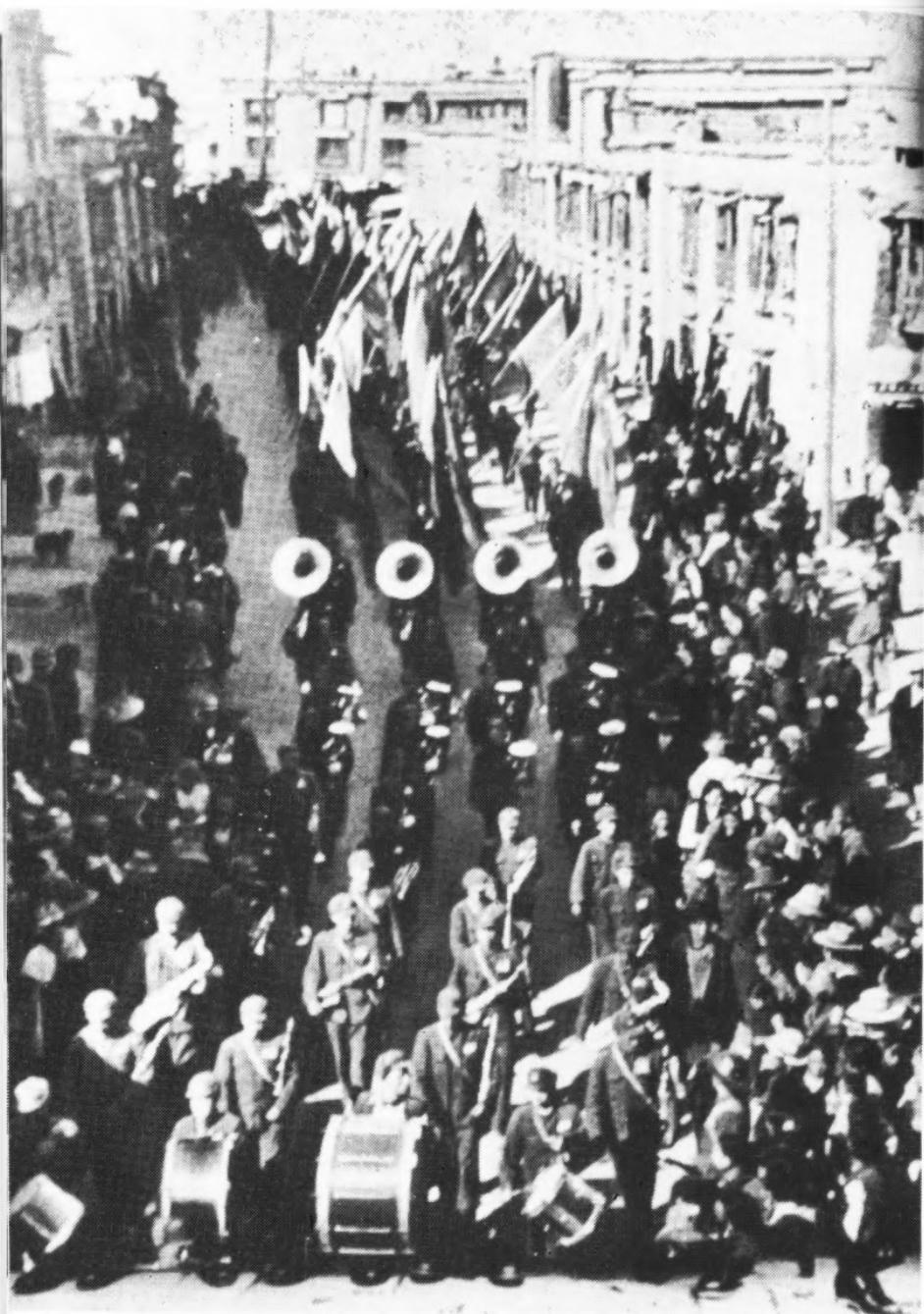
The KMT government representative sent to preside over the crowning ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama in 1940 with the newly "incarnated" Living Buddha.



The gold seal given by a Qing emperor to the Dalai Lama empowering him to look after administrative and religious affairs in Tibet.

The jade certificate issued by the KMT government posthumously conferring the 13th Dalai Lama with his title.





The People's Liberation Army marching into Lhasa after the peaceful liberation of Tibet.

are Tibetan; 2,130 of the 3,060 students in secondary vocational schools are Tibetan; and more than 1,900 of the 2,860 college students are Tibetan. To further develop the region's education, the regional people's government allocated one-eighth of its annual budget for education, the largest ratio in the country.

In contrast to the present situation, there was not a single modern school in Tibet before 1951. There were only a few old-style private schools whose enrolment totalled less than 600. Now 54.4 percent of school-age children attend school, and total enrolment at all levels of schooling is close to 150,000. Illiteracy has dropped from 98 percent in 1951 to 60 percent. Of course, this is still not satisfactory and great efforts must be made to improve the present situation.

In any event, there is no way one can conclude that Tibetan children have been deprived of their right to education or that Tibet has been turned into an area of illiteracy.

29. Q: It is reported that there are serious problems of unemployment and child labour among the Tibetans. Is it true?

A: Tibet's labour force is not in the surplus; instead, it has been falling short of demand for the economic development. The worker-recruitment quotas set by the state for the region every year are always hard to meet. The so-called serious problem of unemployment is nonexistent in Tibet. Among the recruited workers, Tibetans are always in the majority. In terms of wages, fringe benefits and labour protection, the state treats Tibetan and Han workers equally.

The Chinese government has clearly stated a ban on child labour. In Tibet child labour has never been a serious problem. It is true that in the farming and pastoral

areas of Tibet some children share their parents' work. Although this often adversely affects the popularization of primary education, it is a problem of a different nature.

30. Q: People at the side of the Dalai Lama also said that the hospitals in Tibet only serve the Han people. Is that true?

A: Not at all. As is well known, the Chinese People's Liberation Army garrisoned in Tibet sent many medical teams to cities, towns and the countryside to give Tibetans free medical care in the early 1950s. Since then, Tibet has been the only place in China where all the people receive free medical service. All Tibetans, government employees or not, need pay neither for seeing a doctor nor for an operation. Even their expenses for medicine are borne by the state.

For more than 30 years, the majority of out-patients and in-patients in the hospitals run by the autonomous region has been Tibetans. For example, the total number of out-patients in Tibetan hospitals in 1986 was 6,340,165, of which 5,858,204 were Tibetan patients, or 92.4 percent of the total. The total number of in-patients were 72,212, of which 65,712 were Tibetans, or 91 percent.

According to census data, the birthrate in the population of Tibet in 1981 was 31.05 per thousand. That was 10.15 per thousand higher than the national birthrate of the same year. The mortality rate was 9.8 per thousand, compared with 30 per thousand before the democratic reform in 1959. Population growth was 21.13 per thousand. It was good medical service and effective measures taken to prevent malignant infections and cure diseases affecting natality that caused this situation.

31. Q: How long is the average life-span of the Tibetans living in Tibet? How is it compared with what it was before the peaceful liberation of Tibet?

A: Along with the rising of people's living standards and the development of the medical and health facilities and services, the Tibetan population in Tibet has increased greatly since the region's peaceful liberation in 1951. The size of the population has expanded from 1.2 million in 1951 to today's 2 million. The average life-expectancy of Tibetans has risen from 35.5 years before the liberation to 63.7 today, a margin of 28.2 years.

32. Q: Some people have claimed that China practised forced sterilization and the killing of infants in Tibet. Is this true?

A: This is nothing other than sheer nonsense. China began to advocate family planning throughout the country in the 1970s, achieving notable results. In Tibet, however, it has only been encouraged among Tibetan cadres, workers and staff where the conditions were suitable. The government has never asked the Tibetan farmers and herdsmen to practise family planning. Even among the Tibetan cadres, workers and staff, the regulations are far more lenient than is the case with Hans in other parts of China. The state advocates one child per couple, permits two, and occasionally three under special conditions.

At the same time, Tibet's public health departments have actively strived to raise health standards for women and children. With the aim of raising the birthrate and lowering infant mortality, new midwifery methods have been popularized, women have been encouraged to give birth in hospital and knowledge on infant health has been widely disseminated. As a result, the Tibetan population has risen from 1.2 million in 1952 to about 2 million in 1986.

III. Policies Towards the Dalai Lama

33. Q: What policy has the central government adopted towards the Dalai Lama?

A: The central government's policy towards the Dalai Lama can be summed up as follows:

All patriots belong to one big family, whether they rally to the common cause early or late; let bygones be bygones; the government welcomes the Dalai Lama to visit or settle in the motherland and guarantees his freedom to come and go.

To put it more concretely, the policy includes five points that the central government has repeatedly stated:

(1) China has entered a new period of political stability and economic prosperity in which all the nationalities can unite and help each other better than before. The Dalai Lama and his followers are clever. They should believe this. If they don't, they may watch for a few more years.

(2) The Dalai Lama and his envoys to the central government should speak frankly and sincerely. They should not play hide-and-seek or barter. There is no need for rehashing the historical issue; let the history of 1959 be forgotten.

(3) The central government sincerely welcomes the Dalai Lama and his followers to come back and settle down; the government hopes he can contribute to maintaining the country's unification, promoting the unity between the Han and Tibetan people and that

among all nationalities, and the China's modernization drive.

(4) After returning, the Dalai Lama may enjoy the same political treatment and living conditions as he had before 1959.

According to a leader of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, the committee may advise the National People's Congress (NPC) to elect the Dalai Lama a vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee. Also, after consultation, the Dalai Lama may become a vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). It's unnecessary for him to hold a post in Tibet, because younger Tibetans have taken office, and they are doing a very good job. Of course, the Dalai Lama can often make tours to Tibet. Likewise, proper arrangements will be made for his followers. They don't have to worry about their work and life, which will surely be better than before, because the country has developed.

(5) Upon deciding when to return, the Dalai Lama can issue a press statement. It is up to him what to say. He may also inform the central government of the date of his arrival. If he plans to go to Guangzhou via Hong Kong by land, the central government will send an official at the ministerial level and some representatives to meet him at the border. If he wants to return by air, the central government will organize an appropriate welcoming ceremony. Either way, the news will be published.

34. Q: If the Dalai Lama returns, can he settle in Tibet?

A: Under the precondition of maintaining the unification of the motherland and the unity of all nationalities, the central government welcomes the Dalai

Lama to come back. Where he will live is not an important issue.

On April 4, 1988, Bainqen Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain, vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, told a correspondent from the *Washington Post* that the only requirement for the Dalai Lama's return is that he must renounce his claim of Tibetan independence, uphold the unification of the motherland and enhance the unity of nationalities. In regard to residence, Bainqen said that the Dalai Lama may live in Beijing or Tibet as he likes. But no separatist activities are allowed. The remarks were published in *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) on April 5, 1988.

35. Q: What is the attitude of the Chinese government towards the Dalai Lama's visit to other countries?

A: The Chinese government has always held that the Dalai Lama is not only a religious personage but also an exile who engages in political activities aimed at splitting the motherland. Therefore, the Chinese government resolutely opposes his visits to other countries in whatever capacity and under whatever reason to deliver reports distorting Tibet's history and current situation or advocating "Tibetan independence." It also opposes any country that takes advantage of the "Tibet issue" to interfere in China's internal affairs.

36. Q: What is the basic divergence of views between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government and people?

A: It is whether we should uphold China's territorial integrity and the unity of all its nationalities.

At the instigation of certain separatists, the Dalai Lama has attempted to undermine the unity of the

Chinese nation and to split Tibet from China by counting on some foreign powers. This is what the Chinese government and people, including Tibetans, can never accept. However, the Dalai Lama will not be forgotten for his contributions made in upholding the national unity in the 1950s.

Although the Chinese people regret and resent the fact that the Dalai Lama utilized some separatist slogans, such as "Tibetan independence" and "China is only Tibets suzerain," which were concocted by some imperialists early at the beginning of this century, they still hope he can have a clear understanding of the situation, stop his separatist activities and return perceptively to the stand of upholding the national unity.

37. Q: What is the Chinese government's attitude towards the "five-point proposal" put forward by the Dalai Lama in the United States during September 1987?

A: The Chinese government holds that the Dalai Lama's "five-point plan to settle the Tibet problem" is nothing new. In essence, it continues the advocacy of "Tibetan independence," which both the Chinese government and people resolutely oppose. No attempt to separate Tibet from China's territory or damage the unity of the motherland and its nationalities can be tolerated.

38. Q: How does the Chinese government view the Dalai Lama's "New proposal" on Tibet he put forward in Strasbourg, France, in June 1988?

A: In June this year, the Dalai Lama held a press conference in Strasbourg, France, at which he distributed copies of a speech containing a so-called "new proposal" on Tibet.

The Chinese government holds that this "new

proposal" varies in detail from the "five-point plan" he raised at a Human Rights Subcommittee meeting of the US House of Representatives in September last year. But there are no substantial differences. Both attempt to deny Tibet's status as an inalienable part of China's territory, and deny the Chinese government's sovereignty over Tibet. Their aim is to internationalize the Tibet question. The Chinese government and people will never accept this "new proposal" or other similar suggestions. On the question of sovereignty, the People's Republic of China will neither yield nor make any concessions to any external force. The Chinese government has solemnly declared that neither independence nor semi-independence or disguised independence of Tibet will do. The attempt to internationalize the Tibet issue and to rely on the support of external forces to achieve the aim of splitting China will never succeed.

The Dalai Lama mentioned in his "new proposal" that he was prepared to send his representatives to hold discussions with China's central government. As a matter of fact, the channel is always open for dialogue between the Dalai Lama and the central government. So long as the Dalai Lama has a sincere desire to improve relations with the central government and wishes to contribute to safeguarding the unification of the motherland, to promoting unity between Tibetans and Hans and to Tibet's development and prosperity, the central government is ready at all times to welcome him or his representatives to discuss matters in China or at any Chinese embassy abroad. If the Dalai Lama thinks these places are not convenient, he may choose another place. But no foreigners can be allowed to attend. Any issue is open for discussion except the question of "Tibetan independence."

39. Q: How does the Chinese government value the idea of a “greater Tibetan autonomous region” suggested by some people around the Dalai Lama?

A: It is an unrealistic idea.

As it is known to many, the Tibetan ethnic group in China inhabits part of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan provinces, as well as the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Being separated by mountains and rivers, these areas have never been a unified administrative region. Nor have they formed an economic unity because of their uneven development, both economically and culturally.

When the Chinese government delimited its autonomous regions, it took into account the equal rights of the minority nationalities, their economic and cultural development and the regions' administration.

The Tibet Autonomous Region boasts a total area of 1.2 million square kilometres. It has proved a hard enough task for an autonomous government to administer affairs in such a vast area. Therefore, the idea of a “greater Tibetan autonomous region” is neither realistic nor scientific, regarding the formation of administrative divisions in history and future development of these areas.

40. Q: Why doesn't China agree to apply the “one country, two systems” concept to Tibet?

A: The “one country, two systems” concept is a principle China designed for tackling the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan issues to bring about the reunification of the motherland. The question of Tibet is completely different from the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan issues. Therefore, they should not be mentioned in the same breath. The Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet reached between the Central People's

Government and the Tibetan local government in 1951 states clearly that Tibet should exercise regional national autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government. Tibet abrogated the feudal serfdom through democratic reforms in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and in 1965 the Tibet Autonomous Region was set up.

The introduction of regional national autonomy for Tibet and other areas inhabited by minority ethnic groups within China has helped these regions, under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government and in line with their own characteristics, to adopt policies and measures to mobilize the initiative and creativity of their people and to accelerate their political, economic, social and cultural development in an all-round way. The aim has always been to realize the goal of common development and prosperity of all the nationalities.

41. Q: Will the Chinese government permit the Tibetans who fled abroad with the Dalai Lama and have acquired foreign citizenships to return? If so, what formalities should they go through before their homecoming visit?

A: The Chinese government welcomes any of them to come back to visit their relatives and friends in Tibet or go sightseeing, if they would not take part in separatist activities harmful to the national unity. Before they come back, they only need to apply with their passports for a visa at the Chinese embassy or consulate in the country where they are.

42. Q: What relations does the self-exiled Dalai Lama maintain with the Bainqen Lama?

A: According to the *China Daily* of September 29, 1988, at the beginning of April 1988, the Bainqen Lama

had a telephone conversation with the Dalai Lama when the latter was in London.

The Bainqen Lama told the Dalai Lama that a few people made trouble in Tibet and it was not in the interests of the Tibetan people. He also said the riots had no role in solving the problems in Tibet, which could only be solved through consultation. To set fire to cars and throw stones at people was undesirable, and he hoped that the Dalai Lama would use his influence to stop such violence. The Bainqen also hoped that the Dalai Lama would not instigate disturbances from abroad.

The Dalai Lama asked the Bainqen Lama to show leniency to the ringleaders of the March riots, to which the Bainqen Lama replied he would do so as far as possible.

The Bainqen Lama also told reporters that although he and the Dalai Lama differed politically, religiously, they were still good friends who maintained contact through correspondence and telephone exchanges.

IV. Population

43. Q: Has there been a decrease in the number of Tibetans since the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951?

A: No. The Tibetan population has not decreased. It has increased during this period at the fastest rate in the past 1,000 years.

According to historical records, Tibet's population was estimated at more than 4.6 million in the seventh century. Frequent wars reduced the population to 560,000 in the 13th century, and it rose again to 940,000 in the 18th century.

The population in Tibet (including the Qamdo Prefecture put under the administration of Tibet in 1956) has increased steadily since the peaceful liberation of the region. It was 1.27 million in 1953, and increased to 1.892 million in 1982, of whom Tibetans accounted for 94.4 percent, reaching 1.786 million, 500,000 more than the 1953 figure. That is to say, the number of Tibetans in the region increased by more than 40 percent in 29 years. Such a rate of population growth has been exceptional in the history of Tibet.

44. Q: Dalai and his followers claim that 7.5 million Hans have been emigrated to Tibet, and that Tibetans have become a minority nationality in the region. Is that true?

A: It is an accusation with no regard for the objective facts.

How things actually stand is that groups of educated and technically trained Han people go to work in Tibet to help develop the local economy and culture. But because of the highland climate and adverse reactions due to the high altitude, most of those people take turns to working there. Usually they return to the hinterland provinces after a few years of employment in Tibet.

How many Hans are there in Tibet? According to census figures, the Hans who worked in Tibet numbered 37,000 in 1964 and 92,000 in 1982, accounting for 4.8 percent of Tibet's total population.

By the end of 1986, Tibet's total population was 2.024 million, of whom 1.937 million, or 95.68 percent, were Tibetans. The Han people numbered 73,000, accounting for 3.62 percent of the total population. The remainder, about 14,000 in total, comprised other ethnic groups, such as Luobas, Huis, Moinbas and Naxis.

45. Q: What is the Tibetan population? How is it distributed?

A: According to statistics of the third population census of 1982, Tibet's population totalled more than 3,970,000 that year.

Of the total population, 99.8 percent live in compact communities in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and in Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan provinces; 0.2 percent live scattered in 24 other provinces or autonomous regions.

The number of Tibetans living in compact communities in Tibet, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan is as follows:

Tibet Autonomous Region	1,786,544
Sichuan Province	922,024
Qinghai Province	754,254
Gansu Province	304,540
Yunnan Province	95,915

46. Q: How many minority nationalities are there in China?

A: China has 56 nationalities.

According to the 1982 national census, the Hans accounted for 93.3 percent of the national population. The minority nationalities with a population of over 1 million included:

Nationality	Population	Percentage (of national population)
Zhuang	13,378,162	1.33
Hui	7,219,352	0.72
Uygur	5,957,112	0.59
Yi	5,453,448	0.54
Miao	5,030,897	0.50
Manchu	4,299,159	0.43
Tibetan	3,870,068	0.39
Mongolian	3,411,657	0.34
Tujia	2,832,743	0.28
Bouyei	2,120,469	0.21
Korean	1,763,870	0.18
Dong	1,425,100	0.14
Yao	1,402,676	0.14
Bai	1,131,124	0.11
Hani	1,058,836	0.11

47. Q: How many minority ethnic groups are there in Tibet?

A: Apart from the Tibetans, Moinbas, Lopas, Naxis and Huis live in Tibet. There are also communities of Dungs and Xiaerbabs, whose population has yet to be fully ascertained.

The Moinbas are mainly scattered across the the Monyul district of southern Tibet. They have their own

spoken language, but no script, and so can also speak and write in Tibetan. For many generations, they have inter-married with Tibetans, and they share many economic, cultural and religious customs and habits.

The Lopas are mainly scattered across the Loyul area of southern Tibet. The majority, however, live in the Indian occupied area south of the "McMahon Line." They have their own spoken language but no written form. A handful know Tibetan. They engage in agriculture and hunting and are good at archery.

The Naxis live around Markam in eastern Tibet. They have their own spoken language. But usually use Chinese. Principally crop cultivators, a few work in animal husbandry, the handicraft industry and commerce.

The Huis live in towns such as Lhasa, Xigaze, Qamdo and Zetang and speak both Tibetan and Chinese. They mainly work in commerce, handicraft trades and animal slaughtering. In Lhasa, they have their own mosques.

The Dents live in the Zayu area of southeastern Tibet. They have their own spoken language, but no written form. Their major source of living is crop cultivation.

The Xiaerbas live in the region around Zhangmu and Dinggye County in southwestern Tibet. They have their own spoken language but no form of writing, for which they use Tibetan. Before the 1950s, they mainly engaged in barter trade and portering. Now, most of them cultivate crops and raise animals.

V. Religious Belief

48. Q: What policies has the Chinese government adopted towards religious belief in Tibet?

A: Freedom of religious belief is a basic policy of the Chinese government. It applies to Tibet without exception. It is clearly stipulated in China's Constitution that all citizens of the People's Republic of China have the freedom of religious belief, and this right is protected by law. That is to say, each citizen has the freedom to believe or not believe in a religion. All citizens, religious or atheistic, are equal politically and have the same rights and obligations. All religions are equal, and the state treats them equally.

49. Q: Some people claim that the Chinese Communist Party has eliminated religion in Tibet. Is this true?

A: Any one who has been to Tibet and has no prejudice will say it is not true.

In Tibet there are now 1,142 active monasteries and religious centres. Incense smoke can be seen everywhere curling up from the monasteries. Lamps in front of Buddhist statues burn day and night. There are always continuous streams of worshippers walking round monasteries and prostrating themselves in the street to pray. Most Tibetan families have niches for Buddhist statues, and colourful sutra streamers are openly displayed.

Chinese Communists are atheists, but they are not opposed to others having religious beliefs. They do not stand for the abolition of religions by force. China's Constitution stipulates that all citizens have the freedom to religious belief. But no state organs, social groups or individuals are allowed to interfere with or discriminate against the religious beliefs of others. In fact, regular religious activities are protected by the state.

In the past 10 years, the Chinese government has allocated more than 36 million yuan in special funds to rebuild and renovate monasteries in Tibet that were destroyed during the "cultural revolution." Many religious centres have been renovated and reopened.

The Tibetan branch of the Buddhist Association of China and Buddhist associations in all prefectures and cities in the region have been reinstated. A Tibetan Buddhist college has been established, and all monasteries have opened sutra-learning classes. The Sunning-the-Buddha Festival, in 1985, and the Monlam (summons ceremony) of Lhasa in 1986, both of which had been suspended because of the "cultural revolution" were revived.

During the 1966-76 "cultural revolution," due to "leftist" errors, the religious policies of the Chinese Communist Party were disrupted. Many temples and monasteries in Tibet suffered serious destruction. But this problem was not exclusive to Tibet. Temples and monasteries in other parts of China also suffered. Now the catastrophe has passed, and the Party's policy of religious freedom is being fully implemented.

50. Q: Did the Chinese government appropriate money for renovating monasteries in Tibet in order to attract more foreign tourists?

A: China is far from being rich, but the government

has still appropriated a large sum of money for renovating monasteries in Tibet in order to satisfy the people's religious desires. At the same time, renovations are meant to safeguard the nation's historical and cultural heritage, not to solicit foreign tourists.

Tibet is located on the "roof of the world." Here mountains roll with snowy peaks overlapping each other. Lakes spread all over the plateau. There are many rare animals living in the wild and vast uninhabited areas. The customs of minority nationalities are enchanting, and folk arts and crafts are magnificent. All this attracts people to come here for sightseeing, mountaineering, hunting and adventure. If foreign tourists are willing to visit temples in Tibet, they will certainly be accorded a warm welcome.

51 Q: Are Tibetans free to take part in religious activities?

A: China carries out a policy of religious freedom. Tibetan lamaists can hold various religious activities freely. They can set up shrines at home or create halls for chanting the sutra and praying every day. They can also go to monasteries everywhere to worship and give alms. The observance of various religious holiday activities is also allowed.

In downtown Lhasa, lamaists from different places can be seen kowtowing in front of the Jokhang Monastery. Inside, halls are crowded with people adding butter oil to the burning lamps and bowing before Buddhist statues.

The annual Monlam or Summons Ceremony is a religious holiday in which thousands of people take part. The Bainqen Lama left Beijing for Lhasa to participate in Monlam in 1986. He touched believers' heads and gave them blessings.

52. Q: How are Tibet's monasteries administered?

A: Every monastery has its own democratic administrative committee (or group) composed of a directors, one or several deputy director and several committee members. The committee, elected by all monks in the monastery on the basis of full consultation, is responsible for overseeing the monastery's Buddhist activities, its repair and upkeep, selecting administrative personnel and any work that goes on. The committee receives guidance and support from relevant government departments in charge of religious affairs, and keeps them informed of any problems in implementing state policies.

53. Q: Are there any professional schools for training religious workers in Tibet?

A: Yes, there are. The Tibet College of Buddhism, founded in 1983, prepares students for future religious work, and various large temples and monasteries also open classes for learning sutras. Moreover, a high-level Tibetan Buddhist institute has been founded in Beijing mainly for cultivating the living Buddhas. The president of the institute is Bainqen Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain, one of the two highest living Buddhas in Tibet.

54. Q: Please give a brief account of the lamasery life. Do lamas suffer many privations?

A: There are altogether more than 20,000 lamas in various temples and monasteries in Tibet. Most are at the age of around 20, with the youngest ones being 16 years old. They spend about four hours a day learning the Buddhist sutras, and debating what they have learned. During the rest of the day, they engage in business services or work in the orchard. Some of them service Chinese and foreign tourists, and some clean the halls of the temple.

They are leading a prosperous life. In addition to alms from the worshippers and special funds allocated by the state, they also earn incomes from the operations of orchards, pastoral farms, stores and the tourism service. Take the Trashilhunpo Monastery in Xigaze for example. Except for the new comers who receive monthly allowances, the average monthly income of a lama of the monastery is more than 100 yuan, more than double that of the local farmers.

Now many monasteries in Tibet have set up democratic administrative organizations, the leaders of which were democratically selected by the lamas.

55. Q: Which monasteries are famous in Tibet? And what is the situation they are in now?

A: Tibet boasts so many monasteries and temples. Among the more famous are the Jokhang Monastery, the Zhaibung Monastery, the Sera Monastery in Lhasa; the Gahdan Monastery; the Trashilhunpo Monastery in Xigaze; the Sagya Monastery in Sagya County and the Palkor Monastery in Gyangze County.

The Jokhang Monastery: This is a well-known monastery of the Yellow (or Gelug) Sect of Lamaism, built in the 7th century. Its location is said to have been chosen by Princess Wen Cheng of the Tang Dynasty, the wife of Songtsan Gambo, king of Tibet. She designed the structure, and the king's other wife, a princess from Nepal, supervised the construction. In the monastery, a statue of Sakyamuni was enshrined, which was brought there by Princess Wen Cheng from Changan, the capital of the Tang Dynasty. In front of the monastery stands a stone tablet marking the Tang-Tibet alliance. The monastery is worshipped by the Tibetans as a holy place.

The Zhaibung Monastery: Built in 1416, this is the largest monastery constructed by the Yellow Sect, in

which many Buddhist classics and cultural relics are kept. In 1653, when the fifth Dalai Lama was entrusted by Emperor Shunzhi of the Qing Dynasty to become the local political and religious ruler of Tibet, it began to serve as a traditional office for the local government.

The Sera Monastery: First built in 1419, this is also one of the largest monasteries of the Yellow Sect. A great number of historical relics are housed in it, including the world-famous Tibetan Tripitaka (a series of Buddhist learning) written in powdered gold and the calligraphy and painting scrolls of the Ming and Qing dynasties.

These three monasteries have always been well protected and maintained since liberation.

The Gahdan Monastery: First built in 1409, this is the oldest monastery in Tibet. It is said it was built by Tsong-kha-pa, founder of the Yellow Sect, and is regarded as the birthplace of the sect. It was destroyed during the "cultural revolution." Now more than 20 of its halls, including one housing a requiem tower dedicated to Tsong-kha-pa, have been repaired. There are more than 200 lamas in residence.

The Trashilhunpo Monastery: Built by the first Dalai Lama, this is the major monastery of the Yellow Sect in the inner Tibetan region. The construction started in 1447 and took 12 years to complete. It was repaired and expanded to the present dimensions by the Bainqens of the succeeding generations. It houses numerous Buddhist classics and historical artifacts. The largest statue of Champa Buddha in it measures 26 metres tall. There are more than 750 lamas in residence.

The Sagya Monastery: Standing on the banks of the Zhongqu River 150 kilometres southwest of Xigaze, the Sagya Monastery is the main monastery of the Sagya (Flower) Sect of Lamaism in Tibet. It includes two sections: the northern section was first built in 1079.

During the mid-13th century when Pagba, the leader of the Sagya Sect, was entrusted the power to administer the political and religious affairs in Tibet by the Yuan emperor, the monastery began to be expanded into a group of palaces, which were severely destroyed during the “cultural revolution.” The southern section was built in 1268 and has been preserved in good condition. The monastery's constructions reflect a blend of Tibetan, Han and Mongolian architectural styles. The main building is the hall for sutra chanting, which can hold a congregation of up to 10,000 lamas. The monastery houses a great number of hand-written Buddhist classics, as well as gifts and tokens given by the emperors of the Yuan Dynasty. There is a large mural depicting the scene of Pagba being received by Kublai Khan, the founder of the Yuan Dynasty.

The Palkor Monastery: This monastery was originally built by the Sagya Sect of Lamaism, but it gradually evolved to become a temple embracing various sects of lamaism in Tibet. The Parkhor (Octagon) Pagoda in the temple is an 11-storey construction with a base space of 2,200 square metres. It houses many fine sculptures and murals.

The Tshurpur Monastery: Located in the Doilung-deqen County northwest of Lhasa, it was built in 1187 as the leading monastery of the Karma sub-branch of the Kargyu Sect of the Tibetan Buddhism. Karma Batsong, the abbot of the monastery, was conferred with the title of “The Great Treasure Prince of Dharma” by an emperor of the Ming Dynasty. The monastery houses many cultural relics of Ming and succeeding dynasties.

56. Q: When did Tibetan Buddhism come into being? How many sects does it have?

A: Tibetan Buddhism, commonly known as Lamaism, is a branch of Buddhism practised mainly in areas inhabited by Tibetans and Mongolians. It came into being in the late 10th century. During the mid-13th century, with the support of the central government of the Yuan Dynasty, Lamaism became inter-twined with political power in Tibet, explaining how it spread to areas inhabited by Mongolians.

Due to its long history, Tibetan Buddhism now has many sects, the major ones being the Ningma, Kargyu, Sagya and Gelug.

The Ningma Sect, commonly known as the red sect, was formed in the 11th and 12th centuries. Strictly adhering to the older Buddhist teachings, it opposed those sects that developed "new interpretations." In Tibet, Ningma means the "old school."

The Kargyu Sect, commonly known as the white sect, was established in the 11th century. Its practice centres on the oral teaching of the Buddha's "secret teachings." Many of the leaders of its numerous sub-branches had titles conferred upon them by the Yuan and Ming imperial courts, making the sect a major political force in Tibet. But with the Yellow Sect winning favour with the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), its influence has gradually diminished.

The Sagya Sect was also founded in the 11th century. Named after a place called Sagya where it built a monastery first, its influence peaked during the Yuan Dynasty, when Kublai Khan, the first emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, conferred the title of "imperial tutor" on Pagba, the sect's leader. He was given the power to supervise administrative and religious affairs in Tibet. At the end of the Yuan Dynasty, it was gradually replaced by the Kargyu Sect. Since then, its influence has been limited to the Sagya region.

The Gelug Sect, commonly known as the yellow sect, was founded by Tsong-kha-pa. Its lamas were not allowed to marry and its belief in reincarnation gave rise to the two grand Living Buddhas system of Dalai and Bainqen. In the 17th century, the fifth Dalai Lama received a title of honour from the Qing imperial court and thus became the overall religious leader in areas inhabited by Tibetans and Mongolians. In the mid-18th century, the Qing court ordered the seventh Dalai Lama to assume political leadership, and ever since, the Gelug has been the major Lamaist sect in Tibet.

57. Q: It has been reported that China will set up a "Tibetan Buddhism Guidance Committee." What will be its tasks?

A: The Tibetan Buddhism Guidance Committee is a special organization under the Buddhist Association of China to oversee the practice of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan. Its main tasks are:

1) To unite monks and laymen believing in Tibetan Buddhism and help the government implement stipulations on religion included in the Constitution, and state laws and policies;

2) To educate monks and nuns to be patriotic and law-abiding, protect the citizens' freedom to believe in Tibetan Buddhism, and safeguard the legitimate rights of monasteries and monks and nuns;

3) To train Buddhist intellectuals; and

4) To give guidance to and exercise supervision over the management of lamaseries, co-ordinate the economic activities of various monasteries and raise the living standards of monks and nuns. The aim is to help run well the monasteries according to religious doctrines.



Inside a hospital in Lhasa.



Qinanba Chilie, a state-qualified Tibetan doctor and scholar, at work on an essay.

The Outpatient Building of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Hospital.





A Tibetan teacher at the Tibet University lecturing on anatomy.



A classroom of the Tibet College of Buddhism.



A US public health delegation attending an academic exchange in the Lhasa Tibetan Medicine Hospital.

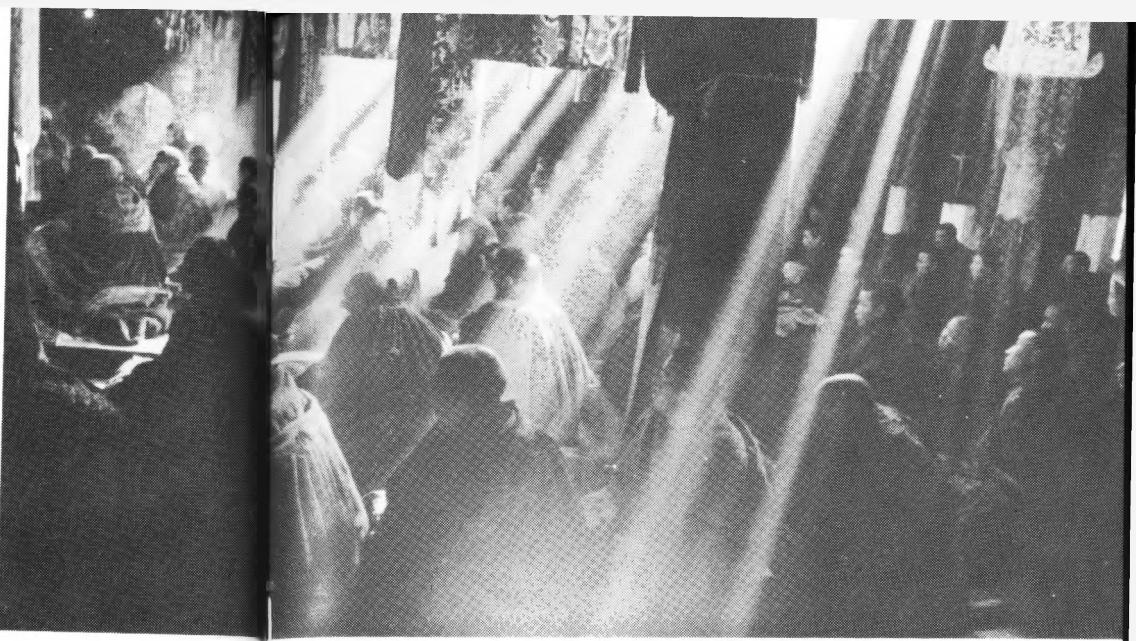


Chinese leaders Li Peng (first, right), Hu Qili (third, right) and Bainqen Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain (second, right) on an inspection tour in Lhasa.

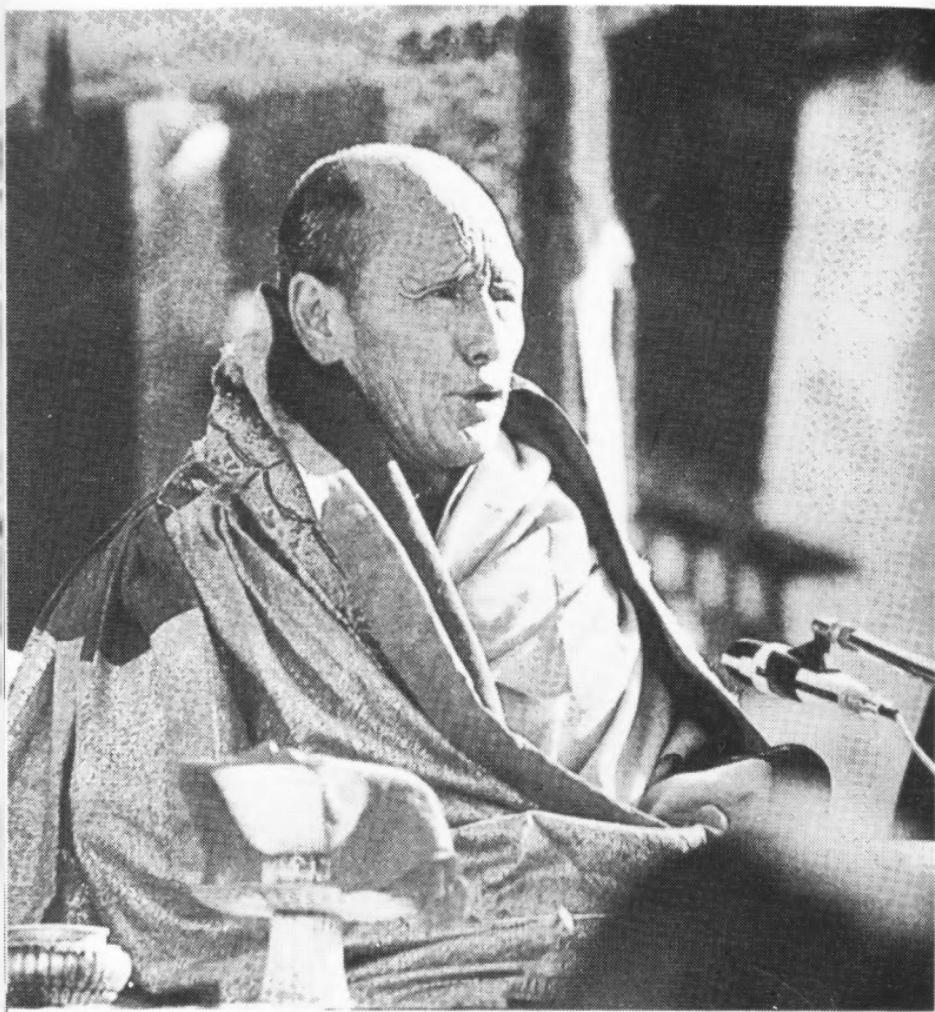
Tibetan delegates to the National People's Congress in discussion.



Lamas in the Sera Monastery attending their morning lesson.



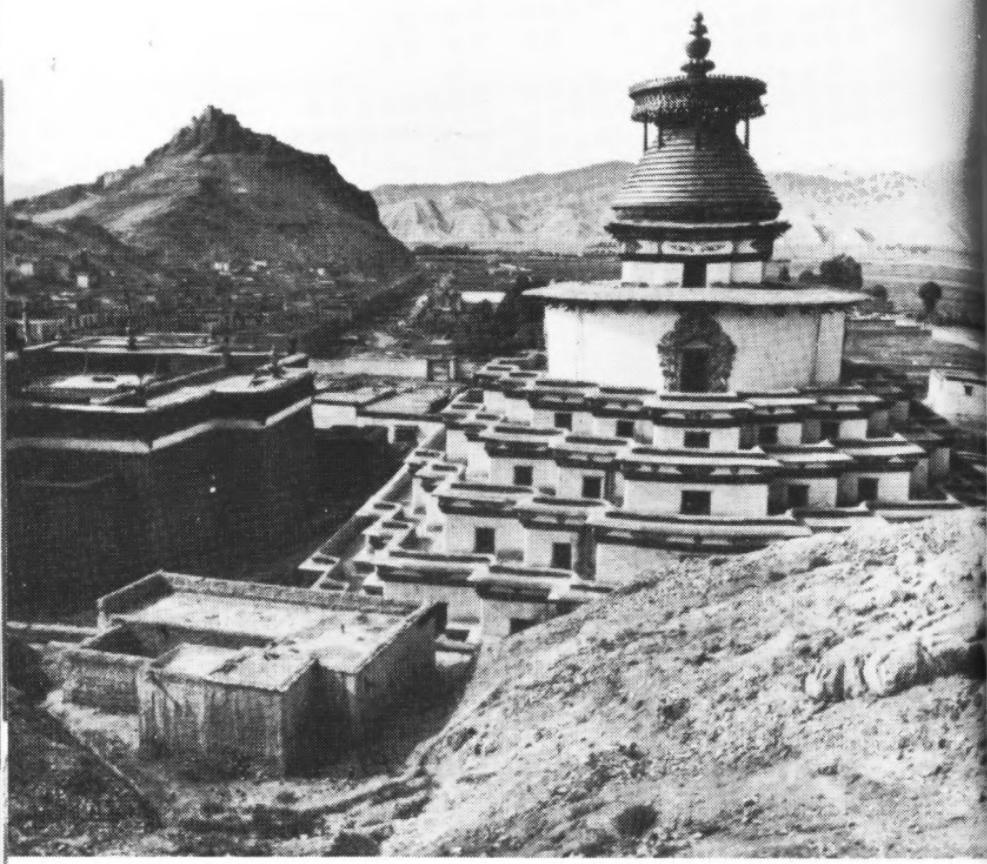
The gilded roof of the Jokhang Monastery.



The Living Buddha Pumi Qiangba Luozhu, deputy chairman of the Tibet branch of the Buddhist Association of China. In 1958 he was awarded a first-class Geshi (doctorate) together with the 14th Dalai Lama.



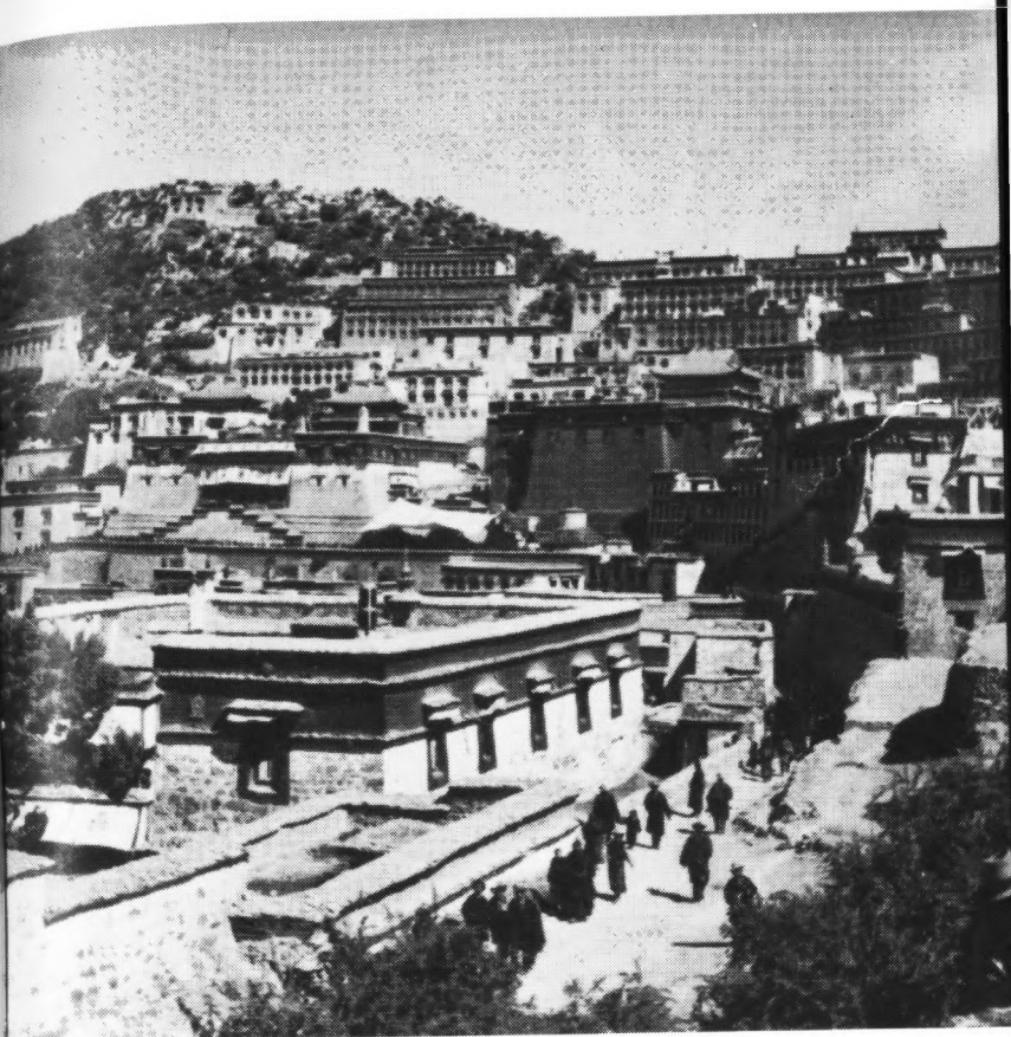
The Potala palace.



The Baiqoi Monastery
in Gyangze.

The statue of the
Champa Buddha in the
Trashilhunpo Monastery.



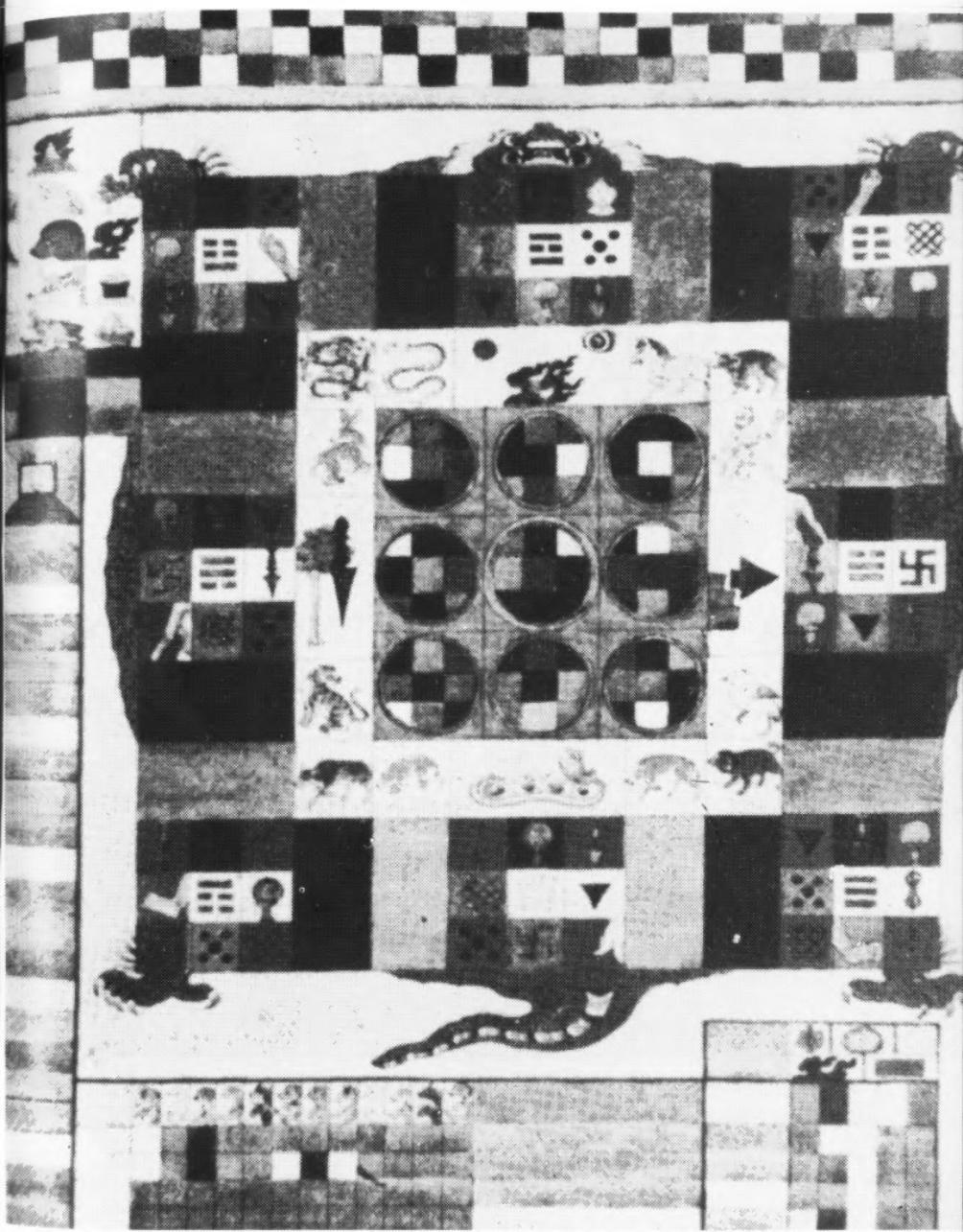


Gahdan Monastery after renovation.



Qamla, a Tibetan compatriot who settled in Xigaze after returning from India.

An ancient astronomical almanac chart kept by the Tibet Astronomical Research Laboratory.





A sculpture made with butter oil mixed with colour for the Lamp Burning Festival.

VI. Right to Autonomy

58. Q: What policies has the Chinese government adopted in regard to minority nationalities?

A: China is a unified multi-national country. Apart from the Han nationality, which accounts for 93.3 percent of China's total population, there are 55 minority nationalities comprising about 6.7 percent of the total population.

The Chinese government adopts the following basic principles and policies towards minority nationalities:

— National equality. All nationalities, big or small, are equal. National discrimination and oppression are prohibited.

— National unity and mutual assistance. This is needed to vigorously help minority nationalities in their political, economic, cultural and educational development. The government will oppose actions to split national unity and will eliminate factors hindering national unity.

— All minority nationalities enjoy the freedom of developing their own spoken and written languages, of keeping or reforming their own customs and habits, and of religious belief.

— National regional autonomy is practised in areas where minority nationalities live in compact communities.

In order to implement these basic principles and policies, the People's Republic of China has formulated

a series of decrees and policies since its founding in 1949, including the following:

In 1951, the government gave instructions to prohibit or change all antiquated expressions bearing discrimination and insult towards minority nationalities. This edict was applied to appellations, place names, stone steles, tablets, horizontal inscribed boards and antithetical couplets.

In 1952, the government issued the Decision on the Protection of All Dispersed Minority Nationality Components for the Enjoyment of National Equal Rights. This provided for minorities to enjoy rights similar to those of local Han people; to make legal appeals and defences in their own national spoken and written languages; and to lodge complaints with the government when they are discriminated against and oppressed.

In 1953, the electoral law provided for each minority nationality living in a compact community to have its own deputies to the local people's congress at various levels. As for minority nationalities who are less than 10 percent of total local population, their deputies can each represent a number of constituents fewer than half that of each local deputy. The new electoral law of 1979 also provided that the minorities with a few people should have at least one representative at the National People's Congress.

In 1952, the state issued the General Programme for the Implementation of National Regional Autonomy to guarantee minority nationalities the right to administer their own national affairs in the areas where they live in compact communities. Since the founding of the People's Republic, four national autonomous regions (Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region was set up in 1947), 30 national autonomous prefectures and 103 national autonomous counties (or banners) have been established in the whole country.

Plans have been made to foster cadres of minority nationalities. Ten nationalities colleges have been set up, and nearly one million minority cadres have been trained.

The spoken and written languages of minority nationalities have been encouraged to develop. In 1951, the state established a guiding committee for studies of languages of national minorities to help nationalities without written languages create them and nationalities without perfect written languages develop them. Those languages which are in common use should be used in elections of representatives to the people's congress in autonomous areas. It was further provided that these areas use their own national spoken and written languages for local administrating, teaching, publishing and broadcasting.

Minority nationalities have been helped to develop their economies and cultures. Besides enormous investments in capital construction in minority nationality areas, the state also grants huge financial subsidies to national autonomous areas every year. It provides these areas with many industrial and agricultural products, machines and transportation vehicles. The state also sends scientists, technicians, teachers and medical personnel, as well as experienced managers to minority nationality areas to help work there.

59. Q: When was the Tibet Autonomous Region founded? How many autonomous regions are there in China?

A: The Tibet Autonomous Region was founded in September 1965. However, preparations began in April 1956. The Dalai Lama was chairman of the preparatory working committee. The Tibetan regional government was dismissed by the central government soon after the

1959 armed rebellion by a handful of Tibetan reactionary rulers and the Dalai Lama fled the country. The working committee functioned as the local government of Tibet, with Bainqen Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain as chairman.

China now has five autonomous regions: The Tibet Autonomous Region, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

60. Q: As one of the autonomous regions, what rights does Tibet have?

A: Tibet's autonomous rights include:

- Enforcing national laws and policies in accordance with the actual situation in Tibet;
- Formulating regulations in accordance with the political, economic, and cultural characteristics of Tibet. The regulations go into effect after ratification by the National People's Congress Standing Committee;
- Administering local finance and planning local economic development;
- Administering local education, science, culture, public health, and sports, protecting and caring for local cultural relics, and developing local culture;
- Establishing local public security forces with the approval of the State Council; and
- Using one or more local languages in government affairs. The prevailing languages in Tibet are Tibetan and Chinese.
- China's Constitution stipulates that the chairmanship and vice-chairmanships of the autonomous areas shall include a citizen or citizens of the nationality or nationalities exercising regional autonomy in the areas concerned; and the administrative heads of the

autonomous areas shall be citizens of the nationality, or of one of the nationalities exercising regional autonomy in the areas concerned.

61. Q: How many decrees on self-government have been formulated by the Tibet Autonomous Region?

A: Since 1979, the People's Congress of the Tibet Autonomous Region has worked out 21 legal decrees and 14 decisions bearing the nature of legislation, including the Modification of the Law of Criminal Procedure of the People's Republic of China Practised in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Modification of the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China Practised in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Detailed Rules on the Procedures of Election of the People's Congresses at Various Levels in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Regulations on the Protection of Forests in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Resolution on the Study, Use and Development of Tibetan Language and Writing and others.

62. Q: What is the proportion of Tibetans to Hans in the Tibet Autonomous Region's civil service?

A: At present, there are more than 53,000 government employees in Tibet. Of these over 33,000 are Tibetans, or more than 60 percent. Some 83.9 percent of the leaders of the autonomous regional Party committee, the standing committee of the people's congress, the people's government and the autonomous regional committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference are Tibetans. Hans account for 15.9 percent, with the remaining 0.2 percent coming from other minority ethnic groups.

All the top posts of the standing committees of the people's congresses, the committees of the Chinese

People's Political Consultative Conference and the people's governments at various levels in Tibet are occupied by Tibetans or people from other minority ethnic groups.

63. Q: Who were the heads of all previous governments of the Tibet Autonomous Region? Were they all Tibetans?

A: Since the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965, four people have headed its government: Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, Tian Bao, Dorje Cedan and the present chairman, Dorje Cerang. They are all Tibetans.

64. Q: Who have served as the standing committee chairmen of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress? What nationality were they?

A: Since the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965, two people have served at the post, and they are Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme and Yang Dongsheng. Both are Tibetans. The current chairman is Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme.

65. Q: How many counties and cities does the Tibet Autonomous Region have under its jurisdiction? What are the nationalities of the county magistrates and mayors?

A: The Tibet Autonomous Region has 75 counties and two cities—Lhasa and Xigaze—under its jurisdiction. The county magistrates and mayors are all Tibetans.

66. Q: Are there any other Tibet autonomous areas in China apart from the Tibet Autonomous Region?

A: Besides the Tibet Autonomous Region, there are

ten Tibetan autonomous prefectures and two Tibetan autonomous counties in China. They are as follows:

Ganze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province;

Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province;

Deqen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province;

Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province;

Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province;

Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province;

Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province;

Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province;

Haixi Mongolian-Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province;

Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province;

Muli Tibetan Autonomous County in Sichuan Province;

Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County in Gansu Province;

67. Q: Why are none of the first secretaries of the Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Tibetans?

A: Until now, there have been no Tibetan first secretaries of any previous Party Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region. This is nothing strange in China, because there is no difference in nationality in the

organizations of the Chinese Communist Party. Any Party member of any nationality can be a Party cadre, provided he or she has the qualifications as stipulated by the Party Constitution.

VII. Culture and Education

68. Q: What is the policy adopted by China regarding traditional Tibetan culture?

A: People often confuse the destruction of traditional culture by the "red guards" during the "cultural revolution" and the correct policy carried out by the people's government during the greater part of the post-liberation period.

Respecting and protecting the traditional cultures of all minorities is the policy of the Chinese government. The traditional culture and precious historical legacy of the Tibetan nationality is no exception. The world-famous Potala Palace, for example, has been listed on the register as a national historical relic, under special protection by the government. Buddhist statues, sutras written in Tibetan, and other precious cultural relics in the palace are all well preserved.

Due to the government's policy of inheriting, encouraging, systematizing and improving Tibetan medicine and medical science, they have developed greatly.

By 1987, more than 43 million copies of 600 books written in Tibetan had been published in China. The world-famous epic *King Gesar* has been saved and edited and published. Tibetan dramas, dancing and operas are being encouraged, and traditional repertoires are inherited as well.

69. Q: Some foreign newspapers have claimed that China has paid no attention to Tibet's history and culture. What are the facts?

A: These claims are groundless. The people's government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has done a great deal to continue Tibet's historical culture. For example, it has established a nationality education research institute, the Tibetan language teaching research society, and the Tibetan language teachers training centre. It has edited, translated and published Tibetan language textbooks and teaching materials for students at primary and secondary schools. It has set up a Tibetan medical school and a medical department in Tibet University to train medical workers. Tibetan history and religious research institutions are established and courses are offered at Tibet University and other institutions of higher education. An academy of social sciences has been founded which specializes in the studies on Tibet's history, religion and culture.

Since 1980, the central government has allocated a huge sum of money for the maintenance of Tibet's temples, monasteries and other historical sites. Since 1981, state expenditure on the maintenance of Tibet's Potala Palace alone has exceeded 4 million yuan. Recently the central government organized a professional feasibility study for the renovation of the Potala Palace, for which funds will soon be allocated.

70. Q: What is the Chinese government's attitude towards traditional Tibetan literature and art?

A: Traditional Tibetan literature and art is an important component of China's traditional culture. The Chinese government attaches great importance to traditional Tibetan literature and art. A few examples are listed here to illustrate the point:

1. Significant progress has been made in the collection, collation and publication of *King Gesar*, a literary work based on the folklore of Tibet. As well as being the longest epic in the world at around 15 million words, it is a valuable historical document of the three or four centuries of war that followed the collapse of the Tubo Dynasty, with much information about the religious rites, social mores, marriage system, customs, and habits of the period.

This work has been designated one of the state's key academic research projects. Research institutions on *King Gesar* have been set up across the country, and the Tibet Autonomous Region's Gesar Research Department has invited more than 30 influential folk artists with the material. More than 300 hand-written or engraved copies of the work in Tibetan have been collected from across the country. So far, 18 Tibetan and several Chinese volumes of this magnum have been collated and published. And 1,600 tapes have been filled with folk artists singing or talking about Gesar.

2. Tibetan opera can be traced back to the 15th century. Now, a widespread popularization programme has led not only to the establishment of full-time troupes in the autonomous region and other areas, but also the organization of amateur opera groups in many villages. In Medu Kongkar County on the outskirts of Lhasa, for example, there are now more than 20. The Sour Milk Drinking Festival in July-August was originally purely religious. Now, Tibetan opera is its main component, hence it has been renamed the "Tibetan Opera Festival."

3. *Tangka*, a religious art form which developed alongside the spread of Buddhism in Tibet, has recently risen to new peaks. Principally composed of painted scrolls, *Tangka* works are hung both in the halls of temples and monasteries, and the homes of many Tibetan

families. When a *Tangka* exhibition opened in Beijing in May 1986, it aroused the interest of thousands of Chinese and foreign visitors. In the summer of 1987, *Tangka* art exhibited in France was highly praised by the French people.

In addition, *The History of Tibetan Opera*, *The Collection of Tibetan Folk Songs*, *The Collection of Tibetan Folk Tales*, *The Collection of Tibetan Folk Proverbs*, and *The Collection of Tibetan Folk Dances* are expected to be published soon. Since 1983, a dozen or so Tibetan cultural and art troupes have visited Japan, the United States, Britain, France, Korea, Hong Kong and other countries and regions.

71. Q: What work has been done to protect cultural relics and historical sites in Tibet?

A: The protection of cultural relics and historical sites has been one of the government's constant policies. However, during the "cultural revolution" (1966-76), quite a number of cultural relics and historical sites were destroyed in Tibet, just as in other places of the country. After the "cultural revolution," a nationwide campaign to bring order out of chaos was carried out and the damaged cultural relics and historical sites were gradually restored or repaired.

The central government has allocated more than 36 million yuan for the restoration and repair of Tibet's most famous monasteries alone. At present, 13 of Tibet's monasteries and palaces have been listed as key cultural treasures under state protection, and 11 have been put under the protection of the autonomous region.

In March 1980, an ancient architecture repair and maintenance company was set up in Lhasa. To date, the company has finished renovating 11 famous monasteries in the autonomous region, including Daipung, Sera

and Gahdan, the Jokhang Monastery and the Norbu Lingka in Lhasa, and Trashilhunpo Monastery in Xigaze. Overall, more than 10,000 square metres of buildings have been repaired and 1,500 square metres of murals have been renovated.

The state also funded the restoration of the tombs of ancient Tibetan kings, the anti-British invasion fortress in Gyantse County, and some other sites of historical interest.

To oversee the preservation work, the Tibetan Cultural Relics Administration Bureau was established soon after the founding of the autonomous region. It is now staffed with many professional specialists to ensure all renovation is carried out authentically.

72. Q: What is the situation of Tibetan studies in China?

A: Tibetans are one of the many ethnic groups in China who have a long history and brilliant culture. The field of Tibetan studies is a comprehensive science. China's study of Tibet began before the Tang Dynasty (618-907), and thousands of works in the field have resulted from research done in various periods of history.

Since the founding of the People's Republic, and especially in recent years, Tibetan studies have developed further. Remarkable progress has been made in training professional researchers and gathering historical data and reference materials. Several institutes of Tibetan studies have been established in various areas and departments. A contingent of experts and scholars which includes Tibetans and people of other nationalities has been formed. Their research has achieved encouraging results. The establishment of the China Tibetan Studies Centre in May 1986 has pushed the country's research in this field to a higher level.

73. Q: What does the China Tibetan Studies Centre do? Who runs it?

A: The tasks of the China Tibetan Studies Centre are to organize and co-ordinate Tibetan studies in China, to collect, collate and publish Tibetan literature and other Tibetan writings, to train Tibetan studies personnel, and to further academic exchanges on Tibetan studies with other countries. When the opportunity arises, it will enrol students for masters' degrees and doctorates.

The general secretary of the centre is the Tibetan scholar Dorje-tsirten, who was formerly the chairman of the people's government of the Tibet Autonomous Region. It is said that in the near future the centre will collate and publish the Tripitaka in Tibetan, and conduct research on Tibet's Sanskrit Peiye Sutras, the relations between the Tibetan local government and China's central government since the Yuan Dynasty, and the Tibetan serf system. It also plans to publish a *Tibetan Knowledge Series* and the *China Tibetan Studies*, a quarterly in both Chinese and Tibetan.

74. Q: It is said that traditional Tibetan medical science is very special. What has China done to develop it?

A: The long and distinguished history of traditional Tibetan medical science makes it an important part of Chinese medical science. The Chinese government has paid great attention to developing traditional Tibetan medical science and medicine, and has adopted a policy of inheriting, encouraging, systematizing and improving it. Some classical works, such as the *Tibetan Medical Prescriptions*, have been edited and published. In addition, new works such as the *New Edition of Tibetan Medicinal Herbs* and the *New Edition of Tibetan Medical Science* have been published. Many specialists in this field

have graduated from the Tibetan Medical Science Department of Tibet University and from the training classes run by the Lhasa Tibetan Medicine Hospital. Preparations are being made to establish a Tibetan medical institute.

Before liberation, Tibet had only a few medical units. These included the "Menzikang" and "Yaowangshan" clinics in Lhasa and the "Gejina" clinic in Trashilhunpo Monastery in Xigaze. All of them were exclusive clinics for the privileged.

To date, seven Tibetan medical hospitals have been established in the region. Another 71 county hospitals have Tibetan medicine departments. Tibetan medicine doctors total 1,170, and nine pharmaceutical plants are producing Tibetan medicines. There are 700 more medical units in Tibet as well. All the farmers, herdsmen and urban residents enjoy free medical care.

75. Q: How about the use of the Tibetan language?

A: China's Constitution stipulates that every nationality has the right to use and develop its own language.

Since the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the Chinese government has constantly attached great importance to the use and development of Tibetan, training a large number of language specialists in various schools. The number of newspapers and magazines published in Tibetan has continuously increased and the Tibetan edition of the *Tibet Daily* has a history of 20 years.

In both rural and urban areas, most primary schools use Tibetan. In all middle schools and colleges, there are special courses in the language, and the Tibet University has a Tibetan language department. The regional government also set up many language research institutions, such as the Nationality Education Research

Institute, the Tibetan Language Teaching Society and the Tibetan Teachers' Training Centre. In co-operation with other provinces and regions with Tibetan populations, the regional government has published a series of standard textbooks, teaching guidelines and reference materials for primary and secondary schools.

All the regional government's official documents are written either in Tibetan or both Tibetan and Chinese. The regional people's government and the regional people's congress have also adopted The Regulations on the Use and Development of the Tibetan Language. In February 1988, the regional government set up the Guidance Committee on the Work of Tibetan Language, with Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme and the Bainqen Lama as advisers. The committee drew up a set of detailed provisions for implementing the above-mentioned regulations, including stipulations that starting from late 1990, every unit can refuse to accept official documents if there are no copies in Tibetan; and all official seals, certificates and the proper names of public institutions must use both Tibetan and Chinese.

The Tibetan language will further develop and be more widely used with the implementation of the regulations.

VIII. Economic Development

76. Q: What Is the status of economic development in Tibet?

A: Since the democratic reform in Tibet and especially since 1978, the economy has developed rapidly and outstanding achievements have been made. Industry has gradually climbed from zero to more than 250 medium-sized and small enterprises, including power, textiles, construction, building materials, printing and food factories. Handicrafts, agriculture and animal husbandry have also developed.

According to 1987 statistics, the total industrial and agricultural output value of the whole region increased to 900 million yuan from 180 million yuan in 1985, 4.79 times higher than that of 1959. Of that, agriculture accounted for 712 million yuan, a 7 percent increase over 1986. Grain output totalled 467,000 tons, and total industrial output value reached 180 million yuan, 6 percent higher than in 1986. In 1987, the number of foreign tourists Tibet hosted was 43,000. The tourist industry brought in 56 million yuan, and the profit was 130 million yuan. Tourism has also promoted the development of communications, telecommunications, commerce and catering services.

The import and export trade has also expanded. The total value of imports and exports was 150 million yuan, up 36.4 percent from 1986. The foreign exchange actually earned was US\$9.69 million, up 86.5 percent from 1986.

Consequently, the economic development has improved the living standards of the people. Every person has an average of 300 kilogrammes of grain a year, and the per-capita income of 1987 was 361 yuan. Many families have television sets, refrigerators and washing machines. By May 1987, the people's savings deposits were 1.54 billion yuan.

77. Q: What policies and assistance has the central government provided in regard to economic development to Tibet?

A: The central government has consistently paid much attention to Tibet's economic development and has worked out a series of special policies and flexible measures relative to the actual conditions there.

Although economic construction has mainly relied on the efforts of the people of all nationalities in Tibet, the state has given great assistance in order to initially overcome the region's poverty and back-wardness. State assistance includes:

1) Financial subsidies. From 1952 to 1986, the central government provided more than 12 billion yuan in financial subsidies.

2) Investments in capital construction. From 1952 to 1987 the central government's investment in Tibet amounted to 3.43 billion yuan. Since 1984, nine inland provinces and municipalities have begun to support the building and full operation of 43 projects. These involve energy, communications, culture and education.

3) Other subsidies. From 1979 to 1986 the total amount of various assistances that the central government gave to Tibet is 5.91 billion yuan.

4) Tax breaks. Since 1980 the central government has decided to wholly remit Tibet's agricultural and husbandry taxes, and industrial and commercial taxes of



Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme and Bainqen
Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain.



A view of the Dangxiong
Animal Farm in northern
Tibet.



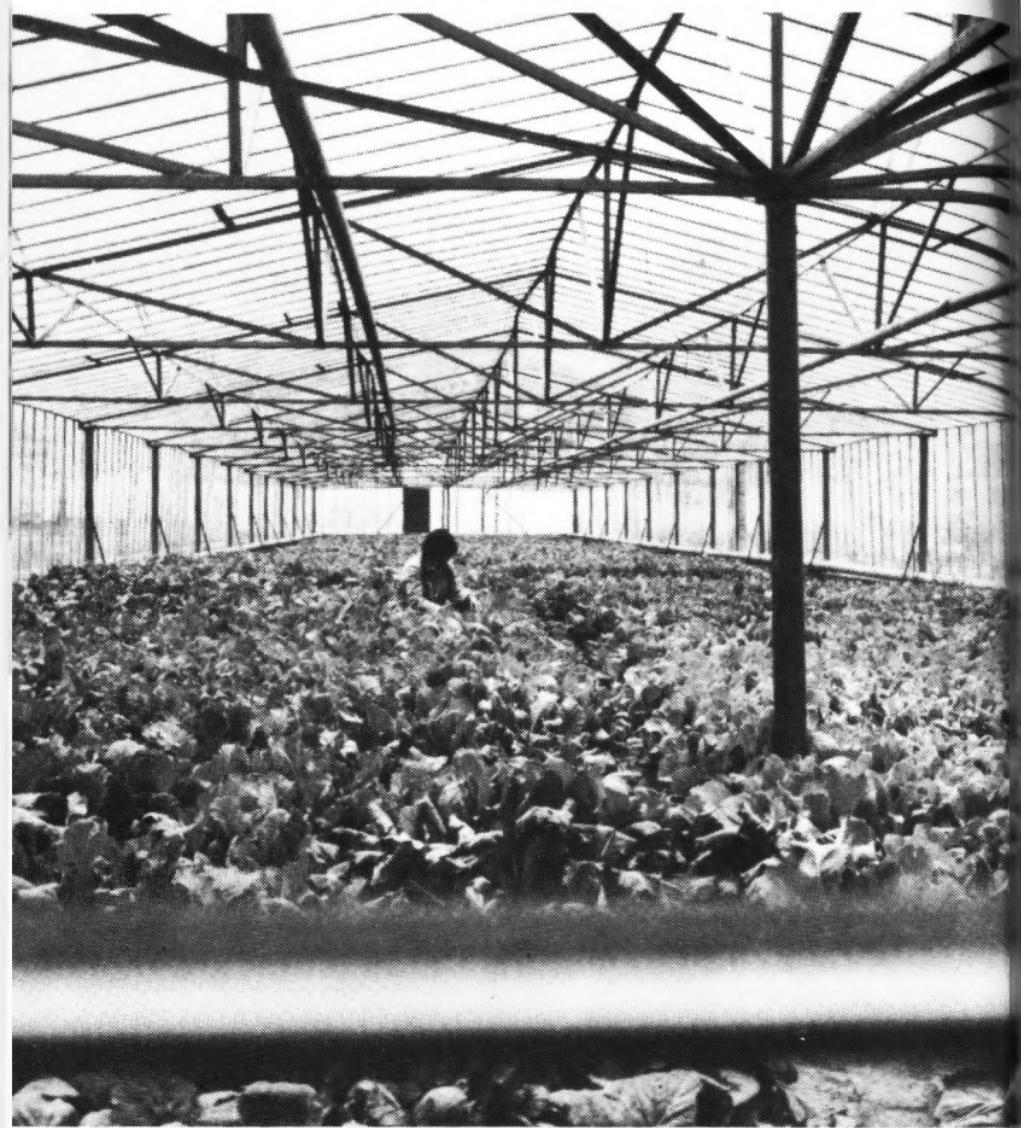
A shepherdess in northern
Tibet.



A workshop of the Lhasa Carpet Factory.

Students of the Tibet Agricultural and Animal Husbandry College at work on an experimental farm.





A vegetable greenhouse on the outskirts of Lhasa.

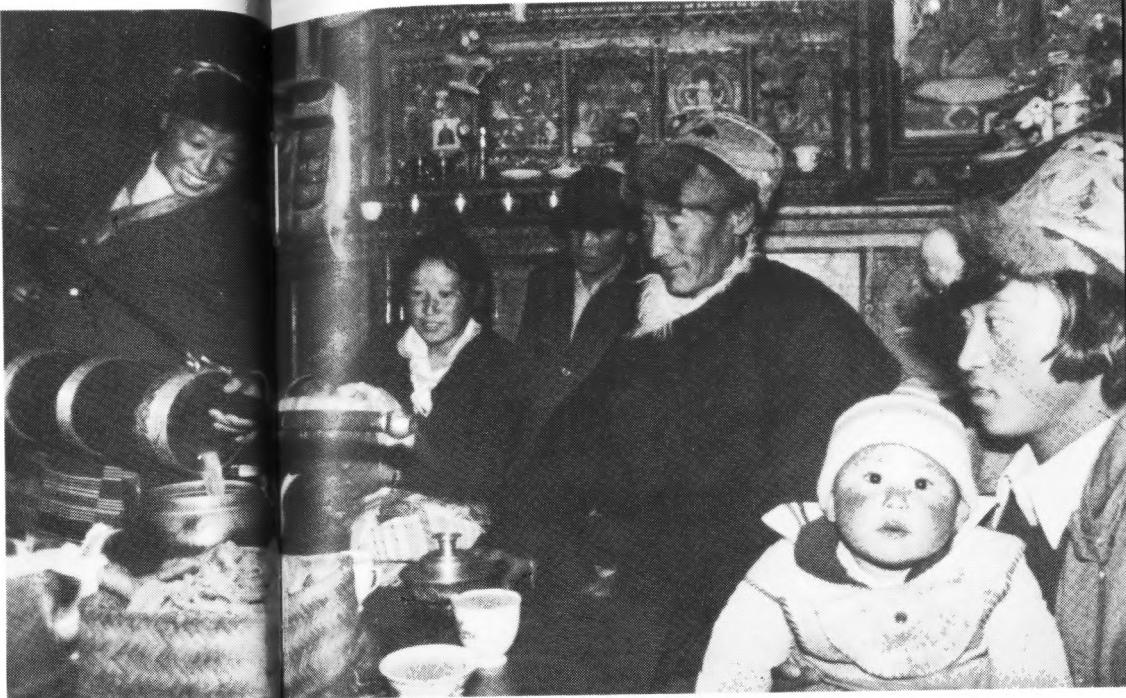


Mountain climbers in Tibet.

The Lhasa Hotel, jointly run by the Tibet Autonomous Region and the American Holiday Inn group.



Tibetan farmer Jia Luo celebrates the Tibetan New Year with his family in Doilungdeqen County on the outskirts of Lhasa. In 1987, they earned 30,000 yuan, with which they bought a truck and a colour TV set and put up a new building.



A Tibetan opera performance at the Norbu Lingka, Lhasa.



Foreign tourists buying souvenirs in Lhasa.



A farmer in Qonggyai County making pottery jars for sale.



Copies of jewelry and religious articles sell well in Lhasa's Bajiao Street market.



The wedding ceremony of a young Tibetan couple.

New Tibetan-style buildings in Lhasa.





The Yigong Tea Farm in Tibet.

collective and private enterprises. All these taxes are about 10 million yuan a year.

5) Material assistance. From 1979 to 1983 the materials that the state allocated to Tibet were worth 484 million yuan. The tea allotment from 1979 to 1984 was 1.06 million *dan* (A *dan* is 50 kilogrammes).

6) Loans for Tibetan peasants and herdsmen.

7) Building and repairing highways. More than 21,500 kilometres of highway work has been completed. Except for Meto County, all the counties are connected by highways.

8) Establishing schools. With the help of the government, three institutions of higher learning, 14 secondary professional schools, 64 middle schools and 2,380 primary schools have been set up. The key middle and primary schools established by the counties and districts supply food, clothing and lodging for the students. Since 1986, 16 provinces and municipalities have begun to run Tibetan classes, and the Beijing Tibetan Middle School has trained personnel for the economic and cultural development of Tibet.

9) Improving health care. From 1973 to the first half of 1987, a total team of 2,623 doctors from more than 10 provinces and municipalities worked in Tibet to treat patients and train medical personnel. There are 95 hospitals at the county level and 770 medical and sanitation institutions with 8,834 doctors, nurses and staff members.

10) Repairing temples. To implement its policy of religious belief, the central government has allocated more than 36 million yuan for repairing and building monasteries in Tibet.

At the same time, the state has never asked for a cent from Tibet. All the funds allocated by the government are used to develop Tibet and raise the living standard of the

people there. Money for the troops stationed there is an extra allocation of the military expenditure.

78. Q: What advantages Tibet has for its economic development?

A: Although Tibet is still quite backward, it has great economic potential.

First of all, it abounds in natural resources. Vast and rich pastures make Tibet one of the top five animal husbandry centres in the country. At present, the region has over 22 million animals, and there is still room for expansion. This provides favourable conditions for the development of wool and leather production and the processing of animal product. Tibet has luxuriant forests of high economic value. It also has many rare animals, birds and medicinal herbs, including giant pandas, several species of monkeys, bears, vultures, rare fungi, and so on.

Tibet is rich in hydro-electric potential. When fully harnessed, it should realize 200 million kilowatt of energy, ranking it second among China's provinces and regions. Its geothermal energy reserves rank first in the country. It also has many important minerals and metals, including chromium, lithium, boron, copper, iron, coal, sulphur and mica.

Second, because Tibet stands on the "roof of the world," it has wonderful and unique natural scenery. Supplemented by its Buddhist monasteries, historical sites and cultural relics, it is an ideal tourist attraction.

Third, through China's Constitution and the Law on Minority Regional Autonomy, Tibet enjoys many economic privileges aimed at promoting its economic progress. In addition, the central government and other provinces and regions have offered much aid to Tibet, and will continue to do so.

79. Q: Are there any Sino-foreign joint ventures or solely foreign-funded projects in Tibet?

A: With the implementation of the policy of reform and opening to the outside world, Tibet's history of isolation has ended. In recent years, inquiries from Tibetan compatriots residing abroad, compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao and foreign businesses about joint ventures, individual proprietorships and construction aid projects have been increasing gradually. By the end of 1987, Tibet had signed 15 letters of intent concerning economic and technological co-operation with various countries and regions. Three joint projects had been set up and eight international construction aid projects had been discussed and implemented. Tibet offers foreign-invested enterprises preferential treatment such as tax reductions or exemptions. It welcomes the establishment of representative offices by foreign businesses. Tibetans living abroad who invest in their home place will qualify for further preferential treatment.

80. Q: How does Tibet attempt to co-operate with foreign factories?

A: Tibet attempts to develop economic and technological co-operation with foreign factories in more than 20 industries. These include energy, communications, construction, light industry, textiles, food, agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry. It welcomes foreign businessmen and people of other circles to Tibet for sightseeing or holding talks on co-operative projects. These projects may include joint venture, co-operative enterprises, enterprises with exclusive foreign investments or compensatory trade. Such co-operative efforts not only will benefit the exploration of resources in Tibet, speed up the development of the Tibetan economy, but will also serve the interests of investors.

81. Q: How do foreign people invest in Tibet?

A: The Tibet Autonomous Region welcomes foreign enterprises and businesses to invest or engage in individual proprietorship and co-operation in Tibet. In 1986, a Tibetan economic investigation group went to Hong Kong to hold business talks and signed some letters of intent for co-operation on a number of projects. At present, preferential measures to encourage foreign investment are being studied and worked out. The general principles are: Expanding possibilities for investment, giving favourable treatment to foreign investors, and welcoming the establishment of working agencies. Any foreign company wishing to invest in Tibet should contact the government of the Tibet Autonomous Region through Chinese organs residing in foreign countries or by any other way possible.

82. Q: How about Tibet's tourist resources? How do foreign people travel in Tibet?

A: Tibet has abundant tourist resources. It is the principal part of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. It has a vast area, although much of it is hard to reach. Tibet is called "the roof of the world."

Much of Tibet's natural scenery is colourful. There are mountains on which the snow never melts, primitive forests, and vast grasslands, rivers and lakes. It also has hundreds of natural, geysers and hot springs.

The region holds Mount Qomolangma, the world's highest peak, and Nam Lake, the world's highest lake. Within its boundaries live many wild yaks, Tibetan antelopes, Tibetan snow cocks and other rare animals. All these provide tourists with favourable conditions for travelling, mountain climbing, exploring and other activities.

Among Tibet's unique scenic spots and historical

sites are many temples and monasteries, ancient buildings, magnificent palaces and royal tombs. The region's rich cultural history is reflected in its murals, sculptures, operas, dances, music, poetry and prose, folk tales, and the splendid traditional culture of its people. Tibetans are fond of singing and dancing. Hospitable and warm, they gladly welcome tourists.

To provide tourists with all possible help, the Tibet Autonomous Region has established several travel organizations, such as the China Travel Service Tibet Branch; the Tibet Youth Travel Service; the Hong Kong-China Tibet Qomolangma Co. Ltd; the Tibet International Sports Travel Service Co. and the Lhasa Travel Company. Altogether Tibet has 21 hotels and restaurants for foreign tourists, with 3,800 hotel beds between them. The quality of service has shown great improvement in recent years.

People who plan to travel in Tibet should contact the China Travel Service or any of the organizations mentioned above.

83. Q: What are the main problems Tibet faces in developing its economy?

A: The main problems Tibet faces at present are low productivity, difficulties in energy and communications, underdeveloped education, a shortage of trained personnel, poor management of enterprises, low economic efficiency and poor natural conditions in comparison with other provinces and autonomous regions. Therefore, the per-capita income is fairly low. To resolve these problems, the Party committee and government of the Tibet Autonomous Region are leading the people to carry out the policies of reform and opening to the outside world. They hope they can invigorate the economy as soon as possible and considerably improve the people's living standard.

84. Q: It is reported that China has deployed nuclear weapons and dumped nuclear waste in Tibet, damaging the environment there. Is that true?

A: No. China has never deployed nuclear weapons nor dumped nuclear waste material in Tibet. The natural environment in Tibet has not suffered from nuclear pollution. On the contrary, in comparison with other areas of China, pollution from industrial production and other sources is the slightest.

IX. Livelihood of the People

85. Q: How are the living conditions in Tibet today compared with the past?

A: Tibet was a feudal serfdom prior to the democratic reform. Under such a system, most land and other means of production were owned by the "three feudal estate-holders" (officials, monasteries and nobles), and the labouring people lived an extremely poor and miserable life.

All serfs were appendages to feudal lords and had little personal freedom. Over half of their harvest from a whole year's hard work fell into the hands of the feudal estate-holders.

In general, serfs worked under the supervision and whips of the serf-owners' stewards. Even the serfs' children were registered on the serf-owners' property books. For the purpose of suppressing attempts to rebel by the serfs, nobles built private jails in their manors. Nobles often used serfs as property to be mortgaged or given with their manors as gifts.

All serfs also had a duty towards their lords that was called *wula* (corvee). Serfs had to live with debts that could not be cleared up for generations. In Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, before the democratic reform there were only 20,000 people living in the city proper, while in the suburbs poor people and beggars were pressed closely together in more than a thousand ragged burlap tents. "Prisoners" with handcuffs, fetters and wooden yokes

were seen begging along the streets.

Since the central government put down the rebellion of 1959 and instituted democratic reforms, the feudal serfdom in Tibet has been thoroughly overthrown and the people have become their own masters. Great changes have taken place in Tibet.

In the 30 years since the democratic reform and especially in the recent 10 years, the economy, culture and all other undertakings in Tibet have developed rapidly and the living standard of the Tibetan people has improved. In 1987, the per-capita income of farmers and herdsmen were up to 361 yuan. Farmers and herdsmen have built new houses. Most of the people have adequate clothing and food. Others also improved their lives with government assistance. In 1987, the total volume of retail sales amounted to 1.65 billion yuan in Tibet. The necessities of life are available on the whole, and urban and rural markets are thriving.

86. Q: Why are the living standards of Tibetans lower than the Han people in other places?

A: This is because Tibet is located in a frontier zone of southwest China where natural conditions are harsh. The cold climate and lack of oxygen are due to its special geographical features. Also, stepping out from a feudal serf society, Tibet had a poor foundation to start with and productivity was very low. After liberation, construction began, but it is still far behind the level of economic development in the interior. Shortages of energy, transportation facilities and qualified personnel have greatly limited the economic development in Tibet.

87. Q: Do the Tibetan and Han people enjoy equal payment for same work?

A: Yes, whether in government offices, enterprises or

institutions, they receive equal pay for equal work.

88. Q: What customs and habits are there in Tibet?

A: Tibetans have many customs and habits of their own. A few major ones are listed below.

Names. Tibetans do not have surnames. Their personal names are adopted from the names in Buddhist sutras associated with good fortune.

How to Address Someone. In general, it is impolite to address someone directly by their name alone. To show respect, a title is usually added. In Lhasa, for example, “la” is said after the name, and in the Xigaze region, “aji” or “ajue” before male names. Within families, however, the elders can call the young people and people of the same generation by their names alone.

Dress. The Tibetans’ principal garment is a long gown made of *pula* (a woollen material) and lambskin. The women like to adorn themselves with headdresses decorated with strings inlaid with agate, coral or jade. Felt or fine leather hats are popular with both men and women.

Food. In agricultural areas, the staple food is *zanba*, made of roasted highland *qingke* barley or peas ground into flour and then mixed with buttered tea. In pastoral areas, the Tibetans eat beef and mutton. The favourite drinks of the region are buttered tea, milky tea and *qingke* beer. Lamas are allowed to eat meat.

Marriage. Monogamy is the standard practice in Tibet. Young people are quite free to choose their own partners. The head of a family is always male, and only men can inherit property. All monks are permitted to marry, except those belonging to the Gelug (Yellow) Sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

Funerals. When an ordinary Tibetan dies, his or her

corpse is carried to a funeral ground in the mountains, dismembered and offered to vultures. Ordinary living Buddhas are cremated. When an incarnated grand living Buddha dies, after a solemn ceremony, his body is covered with spices and medicine and dried. Sitting cross-legged, it is covered with incense paste, in some cases, preserved in a pagoda.

Taboos. It is strictly forbidden for Tibetans to eat the meat of animals with certain shaped feet, especially dogs. In many places, birds, eggs and fish are not eaten. For religious reasons, the killing of wild animals is generally prohibited. People are not allowed to stride across Buddhist vessels and basins for holding fires, and prayer wheels may not be turned counterclockwise. To touch one's head is resented.

Greetings. At formal introductions, people exchange *hatas*, ceremonial silk scarves. On other occasions, great attention is paid to presenting gifts, and when relatives or friends depart on long journeys, packages of buttered tea or *qingke* barley beer are prepared. The construction of a new house is celebrated with gifts from relatives and friends.

89. Q: What festivals are there in Tibet?

A: Apart from celebrating New Year's Day, the International Labour Day (May 1), National Day (October 1) and other national holidays, the Tibetans also celebrate some of their own traditional festivals, which include:

Tibetan New Year. Like Christmas in the West, this is the most important event of the Tibetan calendar. Lasting as long as the Spring Festival, it falls around the beginning of February. People spend their time wishing each other a happy new year, and every household makes offerings for good fortune.

The Monlam. Popularly known as the Grand Summons Ceremony, this festival takes place in Lhasa during the first month of the Tibetan calendar. It is the largest Buddhist celebration in Tibet, during which monks and lay people from Tibet and other provinces meet to recite and analyse sutras and offer praises to Buddha. Alms are given to the lamas, offerings are made to the statue of Buddha Champa, dyke-reinforcement ceremonies are held on the banks of Lhasa River, and butter lantern festivals take place across the city.

The World Public Memorial Festival (Also known as the Lingka Festival). This festival falls on the 15th day of the fifth month of the Tibetan calendar, reputedly the day on which Sakyamuni defeated the pagans. On this day, people dressed in their holiday best take buttered tea, *qingke* barley beer and other food for picnics in the *lingka* parks.

Sour Milk Drinking Festival. Falling around the first day of the seventh month of the Tibetan calendar, this was originally purely a religious festival. It has now developed into a celebration of Tibetan operas, and therefore is also called the "Tibetan Opera Festival." It lasts about one week.

Ong-kor Festival (also called the Bumper Harvest Festival). During this festival celebrated in the eighth month of the Tibetan calendar, farmers dressed in new clothes carry Buddhist statues and walk around their crops, reciting sutras and bowing. Afterwards they gather in their villages to dance and drink. In some places, horse races, ox races and wrestling also take place.

The Lamp Festival. This falls on the 25th day of the 12th month of the Tibetan calendar. It is said this was the day when Tsong-kha-pa, founder of Tibetan Buddhism's Gelug (Yellow) Sect, completed his enlightenment to Buddhahood. To celebrate, many people light rows of butter lamps on the roofs and windowsills of their homes.

X. About the Riots in Lhasa

90. Q: Some people have said that the demonstrations which occurred in Lhasa in 1987 and 1988, despite being peaceful, were forcibly suppressed. Is this true?

A: The demonstrations which occurred in Lhasa in September and October 1987 and March 1988 were by no means peaceful. These riots were deliberately instigated by a handful of separatists, who waved flags of "independence" and shouted slogans clearly aimed at separating Tibet from China and threatening national unity and stability.

The rioters also committed a series of criminal activities. For example, on September 27, 1987, the rioters wounded 24 policemen who had come to maintain order and destroyed two vehicles. In the October 1 riot, they destroyed and burnt 43 cars and motorcycles, set fire to the police station in Bajiao Street, and wounded 325 security officials and policemen.

On March 5, 1988, the rioters destroyed a TV vehicle which was parked in the Jokhang Monastery for the live broadcast of a summons ceremony, and overturned and burnt a car belonging to the Tibet Autonomous Regional Buddhist Association. They also killed one policeman and wounded 328 others.

Article 4 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China rules that any acts which undermine the unity of the country's nationalities or are aimed at instigating

secession are prohibited. Article 92 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China stipulates: "Whoever plots to subvert the government or dismember the state" commits counter-revolutionary crimes. The handful of separatists who instigated the riots obviously violated both the Constitution and the criminal law.

91. Q: What caused the riots, and did it have anything to do with the Dalai clique?

A: A host of facts have revealed that the Lhasa riots were caused by a handful of separatists at the instigation of the Dalai clique.

In 1959, the Dalai clique tore up the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet reached in 1951 between the Central People's Government and the Tibetan local government. They then launched an armed rebellion before fleeing to India. Since then, some members of the clique have never ceased in their attempts to split the motherland by advocating "independence for Tibet." The central government has adopted a policy of leniency towards them, welcoming them to return. However, as they regard the leniency of the people's government as an expression of weakness, they have intensified their separatist activities. Some have disguised themselves as tourists on sightseeing trips or visits to their relatives. They have distributed fly-sheets advocating national separation and calling on the people to make trouble. Others have been to Tibet to form separatist forces.

In September 1987, the Dalai Lama, taking advantage of his visit to the United States, tried to turn the world opinion in favour of "independence for Tibet." Some US politicians took the opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of our country. They allowed the Dalai Lama to announce his "five-point plan" for the solution

of the Tibet problem at a subcommittee of the House of Representatives, and then transmitted his speech to Tibet either as a broadcast or through other channels.

By taking advantage of the masses' religious sentiments and the mistakes and errors that the authorities of the Tibet Autonomous Region had committed in their work, some separatists at home conducted agitational activities. Most of the excuses they used stemmed from events that occurred during the special historical conditions of the "cultural revolution." These misdoings have either been corrected or are being corrected. The People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has plenty of evidence that the Lhasa riots were closely connected with the separatist activities of the Dalai clique. When interviewed by reporters from a French newspaper on October 18, 1987, the Dalai Lama himself admitted that the Lhasa riots had something to do with his activities in the United States.

92. Q: Some people have said that in putting down the riots in Lhasa, the police arrested and beat people indiscriminately, killing quite a few. What is the truth?

A: In putting down the riots, the Lhasa police detained and arrested some of the principal troublemakers who took the lead in smashing, sabotaging, looting and burning. Some of them were taken away from the spot and subsequently released after education. Others, who confessed after interrogation, were released because their crimes were not serious. Of course, it is true that a few wrongful arrests were made in the heat of the moment. These people were set free as soon as they were found to be not guilty.

During each of the riots, Tibet Autonomous Regional leaders ordered the police not to fire on the rioters. However, a few had to use their guns or batons

in self-defence when they were in danger. A thorough investigation indicates that in the October 1, 1987 riot, six trouble-makers and onlookers died: two by stones thrown by rioters, one falling from a high building, one by a ricocheting bullet, one shot accidentally and one shot directly. In the March 5, 1988 riot, four rioters and onlookers died, two were killed by stones thrown by rioters, and two, who were wounded by bullets on the spot, died later despite emergency treatment.

93. Q: Of all those arrested in the riots, how many have been set free and how many are still in prison? How well are they treated in prison? What will happen to them? How many rioters, if any, were executed?

A: All these questions were clearly answered by Doje Cering, chairman of the government of the Tibet Autonomous Region, on August 9, 1988, when he met Winston Lord, US ambassador to China, in Lhasa. He said that in the riot of March 5, 1988, the Lhasa Public Security Bureau detained more than 220 people for interrogation.* Most of them have been released after a period of education because of the minor nature of their crimes and a full confession. There are over 20 still in custody.

Most of those detained in the 1987 riots were released before January this year.

All those still in custody have been well treated. When their crimes are clearly confirmed, the judicial organs will put them on trial. So far no rioters have been executed.

* The Bainqen Lama has recently said that most of the 300-odd lamas and nuns arrested during and after the March riots have been released (See article "Bainqen discloses Buddhist Group," *Beijing Review*, issued No. 41, p.6). subsequent check put the figure at around 220.

94. Q: Were any foreign tourists or reporters at the scene of the riots? If there were, were they detained, warned or deported?

A: In both the riots of October 1, 1987, and March 5, 1988, there were foreigners on the spot. Some even participated in the riots. The public security organs gave some of the foreigners who took part in the riots either an oral warning or a fine. On October 8 last year, the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region summoned 15 foreign reporters who violated the news coverage regulations of the Chinese government and ordered them to leave Tibet within 48 hours.

95. Q: How do religious leaders and the residents of Lhasa view these riots since September 1987?

A: These riots in Lhasa were plotted by a handful of separatists who have close connections with the activities of the Dalai clique. Their aim was to undermine the unity of China and the stability of Tibet in close co-ordination with the Dalai Lama's overseas activities attempting to separate Tibet from the motherland.

These riots have been strongly condemned and denounced by people from all walks of life, including workers, farmers, herdsmen, intellectuals, monks and nuns, and even the upper stratum of religious circles.

In repudiating the riots, Bainqen Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain, one of the two principal leaders of Tibetan Buddhism, said they were instigated by a handful of separatists in Tibet who were at the beck and call of the separatist clique residing abroad. He added that they ran counter to the will of the Tibetan people and were unpopular, saying, "Their criminal attempt will never succeed."

He called on all the Tibetan people to contribute to

maintaining national unity and stability.

Other religious leaders in Tibet have also strongly denounced these riots. Lama Luosang Pingcuo, director of the Jokhang Monastery's Committee for Democratic Management, said: "I am sorry that a few lamas participated in the riots. By being involved in violence against people and property, they have not only violated Buddhist canons but also the laws of the state." Cemolin Danzengchilie, vice-president of the Buddhist Association of the Tibet Autonomous Region, said: "The instigation of riots by a handful of separatists is by no means a religious problem. They do not represent the broad masses of ecclesiastical people."

Most residents of Lhasa strongly opposed the riots. One said, "This handful of separatists do not represent us. Their attempt to split our country can never succeed." Another said, "We are very busy. We hate these rioters who have nothing to do other than make trouble every day."

96. Q: Why were foreigners not allowed to travel nor foreign reporters permitted to cover news in Tibet during riots?

A: First of all, it should be made clear that Tibet is one of the areas of China open to the outside world. China welcomes foreigners to travel and cover news in Tibet.

During the riots, the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region at one point decided not to receive any foreign tourists or visitors except those groups whose visits had been previously approved and contracted. It made this decision because of the then chaotic situation in Tibet and out of consideration for the personal safety of foreign tourists.

According to the regulations of the Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, foreign

reporters going to cover news in Tibet's open areas should apply for a permit at the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region. They can go when their application is approved. In fact, many foreign reporters have already gone to cover news in Tibet since the beginning of this year.

97. After the riots in Lhasa, were any leaders of the Tibet Autonomous Region dismissed or promoted? Are more soldiers or policemen to be sent to Tibet?

A: These riots were instigated by a handful of people and so they quickly subsided. At present, various undertakings are proceeding smoothly in Tibet and social order has returned to normal. None of the autonomous region's leaders has been dismissed or promoted because of the riots, and it has proved unnecessary for the state to dispatch any more soldiers and policemen.

98. Q: What counter-measures have the Tibetan authorities taken since the riots? Are the masses allowed to hold parades and demonstrations?

A: Measures have principally been taken in the following two areas: Strengthening patriotic and national unity education among the cadres and masses and exposing and smashing the plots of separatists; and continuing to implement the Party's policy on nationalities and religion and accelerate Tibet's economic and cultural development.

The Ad Hoc Regulations of the Lhasa Municipal People's Government on Assembly and Demonstration adopted at the second session of the Standing Committee of the Fifth People's Congress of Lhasa on October 9, 1987, have been put into effect. All assemblies and demonstrations which conform to these regulations are permissible in Lhasa.

The major points of these regulations are:

1. Organizers of assemblies and demonstrations must hand in a written application to the municipal public security bureau five days in advance, specifying the purpose, number of participants, time and place. The public security bureau will supply its answer within three days from the day after it receives the application. Assemblies and demonstrations not approved by the public security bureau are illegal.
2. No assemblies and demonstrations are allowed to be held in Bajiao Street, Beijing Road and Yutuo Road.
3. Participants of assemblies and demonstrations must take good care of public property and observe public order. No one is allowed to engage in illegal activities that will encourage splitting the country or undermining national unity. No one is allowed to disturb public order, block the traffic or interfere with production, teaching and studying, work and normal religious activities. No one is allowed to carry weapons, stones, inflammable materials or explosives.
4. During assemblies or parades, anyone preventing government personnel from fulfilling their tasks according to the law by threats of resorting to violence, engaging in other illegal activities or violating articles 2 and 3 mentioned above will be held criminally liable.

99. Q: What Is the situation in Tibet now?

A: In general, the post-riot situation in Tibet is stable and good. This is because the majority of the Tibetan people, especially the farmers and herdsmen, who make up 95 percent of the population, treasure a hard-earned happy life, stability and unity. They strongly oppose separatist rioting, which sabotages the unity between nationalities and breaks social stability. The riots were limited in a small range of Lhasa and caused by a tiny

minority of the Tibetan population, only 0.5 percent. The riots were immediately put down. All the evidences prove that the riots did not enjoy popular support.

100. Q: Some foreign newspapers said recently that the Tibet authorities have dispatched people to temples and monasteries to throw out those lamas and nuns who participated in the riots. Is this true?

A: The Tibet authorities have recently sent several work teams composed mainly of Tibetans into some temples and monasteries which were involved in the riots. Their tasks were to help organize and consolidate the administrative committees of these temples, and to educate those monks and nuns who were led astray by deceiving propaganda and participated in the riots, so that they could understand the sinister intentions of trouble-makers. They have also attempted to ferret out major criminals if any. This action is not aimed at driving the broad masses of monks and nuns from their temples and monasteries.

Appendix I

The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet

The Tibetan nationality is one of the nationalities with a long history living within the boundaries of China and, like many other nationalities, it has performed its glorious duty in the course of the creation and development of our great motherland. But over the last 100 years or more, imperialist forces penetrated China and, in consequence, also penetrated the Tibetan region, carrying out all kinds of deceptions and provocations. Like previous reactionary governments, the Kuomintang reactionary government continued to carry out a policy oppressing and sowing dissension among the nationalities, causing division and disunity among the Tibetan people. The local government of Tibet did not oppose these imperialist deceptions and provocations, and adopted an unpatriotic attitude toward our great motherland. Under such conditions, the Tibetan nationality and people were plunged into the depths of enslavement and suffering.

In 1949, a basic victory was achieved on a nationwide scale in the Chinese People's War of Liberation; the common domestic enemy of all the nationalities—the

Kuomintang reactionary government—was overthrown; and the common foreign enemy of all nationalities—the aggressive imperialist forces—was driven out. On this basis, the founding of the People's Republic of China and of the Central People's Government was announced. In accordance with the Common Programme passed by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the Central People's Government declared that all nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China are equal, and that they shall establish unity and mutual aid and oppose imperialism and their public enemies, so that the People's Republic of China will become one fraternal and co-operative family, composed of all its nationalities; that within the big family of all nationalities of the People's Republic of China, national regional autonomy shall be exercised in areas where national minorities are concentrated, and all national minorities shall have the freedom to develop their spoken and written languages and to preserve or reform their customs, habits and religious beliefs, while the Central People's Government shall assist all national minorities to develop their political, economic, cultural and educational construction work. Since then, all nationalities within the country, with the exception of those in the areas of Tibet and Taiwan, have gained liberation. Under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government and the direct leadership of higher levels of the people's governments, all national minorities are fully enjoying the right of national equality and have established, or are establishing, national regional autonomy.

In order that the influence of aggressive imperialist forces in Tibet might be successfully eliminated, the unification of the territory and sovereignty of the People's

Republic of China accomplished, and the national defence safeguarded; in order that the Tibetan nationality and people might be freed and return to the family of the People's Republic of China to enjoy the same rights of national equality as all the other nationalities in the country and develop their political, economic, cultural and educational work, the Central People's Government, when it ordered the People's Liberation Army to march into Tibet, notified the local government of Tibet to send delegates to the central authorities to conduct talks for the conclusion of an agreement on measures for the peaceful liberation of Tibet.

In the latter part of April 1951, the delegates with the full powers of the local government of Tibet arrived in Beijing. The Central People's Government appointed representatives with full power to conduct talks on a friendly basis with the delegates of the local government of Tibet. As a result of these talks, both parties agreed to conclude this agreement and guarantee that it will be carried into effect.

1. The Tibetan people shall unite and drive out imperialist aggressive forces from Tibet; the Tibetan people shall return to the family of the motherland—the People's Republic of China.

2. The local government of Tibet shall actively assist the People's Liberation Army to enter Tibet and consolidate the national defence.

3. In accordance with the policy towards nationalities laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the Tibetan people have the right to exercise national regional autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government.

4. The central authorities will not alter the existing

political system in Tibet. The central authorities also will not alter the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama. Officials of various ranks shall hold office as usual.

5. The established status, functions and powers of the Bainqen Erdini shall be maintained.

6. By the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama and of the Bainqen Erdini are meant the status, functions and powers of the 13th Dalai Lama and the 9th Bainqen Erdini when they were in friendly and amicable relation with each other.

7. The policy of freedom of religious belief laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference shall be carried out. The religious beliefs, customs and habits of the Tibetan people shall be respected, and lama monasteries shall be protected. The central authorities will not effect a change in the income of the monasteries.

8. Tibetan troops shall be reorganized by stages into the People's Liberation Army and become a part of the national defence forces of the People's Republic of China.

9. The spoken and written language and school education of the Tibetan nationality shall be developed step by step in accordance with the actual conditions in Tibet.

10. Tibetan agriculture, livestock raising, industry and commerce shall be developed step by step, and the people's livelihood shall be improved step by step in accordance with the actual conditions in Tibet.

11. In matters related to various reforms in Tibet, there will be no compulsion on the part of the central authorities. The local government of Tibet should carry out reforms of its own accord, and demands for reform raised by the people shall be settled by means of consultation with the leading personnel of Tibet.

12. In so far as former pro-imperialist and pro-

Kuomintang officials resolutely sever relations with imperialism and the Kuomintang and do not engage in sabotage or resistance, they may continue to hold office irrespective of their past.

13. The People's Liberation Army entering Tibet shall abide by all the above-mentioned policies and shall also be fair in all buying and selling and shall not arbitrarily take a single needle or thread from the people.

14. The Central People's Government shall conduct the centralized handling of all external affairs of Tibet; there will be peaceful coexistence with neighbouring countries and the establishment and development of fair commercial and trading relations with them on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territory and sovereignty.

15. In order to ensure the implementation of the agreement, the Central People's Government shall set up a military and administrative committee and a military area headquarters in Tibet and, apart from sending personnel there, shall absorb as many local Tibetan personnel as possible to take part in the work.

Local Tibetan personnel taking part in the military and administrative committee may include patriotic elements from the local government of Tibet, various districts and leading monasteries. The name list shall be drawn up after consultation between the representatives designated by the Central People's Government and the various quarters concerned and shall be submitted to the Central People's Government for appointment.

16. Funds needed by the military and administrative committee, the military area headquarters and the People's Liberation Army entering Tibet shall be provided by the Central People's Government. The local government of Tibet will assist the People's Liberation

Army in the purchase and transport of food, fodder and other daily necessities.

17. This agreement shall come into force immediately after signatures and seals are affixed to it.

Signed and sealed by
Delegates with the full powers of the Central
People's Government:

Chief Delegate:

Li Weihan

Delegates:

Zhang Jingwu

Zhang Guohua

Sun Zhiyuan

Delegates with the full powers of the Local
Government of Tibet:

Chief Delegate:

Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme

Delegates:

Dzasak Khemey Sonam Wangdi

Khentrung Thupten Tenthar

Kehnchung Thupten Lekmuun

Rimshi Samposey Tensin Thundup

Beijing, May 23, 1951

Appendix II

Dalai Lama's Cable to Chairman Mao Zedong

Chairman Mao of the Central People's Government:

This year the local government of Tibet sent five delegates with full authority headed by Kaloon Ngapoi to Beijing in late April 1951 to conduct peace talks with delegates with full authority appointed by the Central People's Government. On the basis of friendship, delegates on both sides concluded the Agreement of the Central People's Government and the local government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet on May 23, 1951. The Tibetan local government as well as the ecclesiastics and secular people unanimously support this agreement, and under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Central People's Government, will actively support the People's Liberation Army in Tibet to consolidate national defence, drive out imperialist influences from Tibet and safeguard the unification of the territory and the sovereignty of the motherland. I hereby cable you to inform you of this.

Dalai Lama of the Tibet Local Government

October 24, 1951.

24th of the eighth month of the year of the
rabbit, by the Tibetan calendar

Appendix III

Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme on the Truth About the 1959 Rebellion

On many occasions in recent years I have met Tibetan compatriots returning from abroad to visit their relatives. I have often asked them for their explanation of the causes of the rebellion of March 10, 1959. They have always answered: Because the then Tibetan Military Area Command tried to force the Dalai Lama and the other principal officials of the Kasha government to board an aeroplane and fly them to the hinterland. Since then, 29 years have elapsed, but not only do Tibetan youth not understand the truth of the incident, the old people as well are unaware of what really happened. They are still being deceived. Unfortunately, the rumour-mongers are Buddhists. As an eyewitness of the incident, I know its real causes, which today I am duty-bound to reveal.

At about 8 o'clock in the morning of March 10, 1959, the streets of Lhasa were thrown into disorder. People ran about, shouting: "Go to the Norbu Lingka to protect the most valuable treasure (the Dalai Lama)! The Hans are trying to kidnap him." To the Tibetan people, who piously believed in Buddhism, the cry was like a rumble of thunder. So with mixed feelings of alarm, perplexity and terror, people swarmed into the Norbu Lingka. In the name of protecting the Dalai Lama, they surrounded the

place, raising the curtain on the armed rebellion—the “March 10 Incident” of 1959.

According to Tibetan tradition and custom, on December 29 each year (Tibetan calendar), the “Sorcerer’s Dance” is held in the Potala Palace. Every year since the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951, leading members of the Working Committee of the CPC in Tibet and the Military Area Command had been invited to watch this dance. On December 29, 1959, only Political Commissar Tan Guansan and Deputy Commander of the Tibetan Military Area Command Deng Shaodong were in Lhasa. After arriving at the Potala Palace, the Dalai Lama met them in his bedroom and said, “I heard that after their return from study in the hinterland, the art troupe under the Tibetan Military Area Command have performed very well. I would like to see their show, please arrange a time for me.” Political Commissar Tan and Deputy Commander Deng immediately promised to meet his request. They said that at any time convenient to him, the art troupe could be sent to Norbu Lingka to stage a special performance. The Dalai Lama replied that as there was no stage or equipment in Norbu Lingka, he would prefer to see the performance in the auditorium of the Military Area Command. The matter was settled. After returning to their seats to see the Sorcerer’s Dance, Political Commissar Tan Guansan and Deputy Commander Deng Shaodong told all the Kaloons present what had been arranged. The Dalai Lama, however, could not see the show immediately because he had to prepare for an exam.

At about 3 o’clock in the afternoon on March 9, 1959, Comrade Li Zuomin of the United Front Work Department of the Working Committee of the CPC in Tibet came to my home. He told me that the Dalai Lama had decided to see the art troupe’s performances on the

following day. He added that the Dalai Lama had told him, "The Kasha officials need not go to Norbu Lingka tomorrow. They may go directly to the auditorium of the Military Area Command and wait for me." Why was it arranged this way? As a rule, the Kasha officials should first go to Norbu Lingka, and then accompany the Dalai Lama to the Military Area Command's auditorium. I felt things were somewhat abnormal, and had the premonition that something would go wrong. I said to Li Zuomin, "Lhasa has been in utter disorder for the last few days. The hasty decision that the Dalai Lama should go and see the art performances in the Military Area Command is likely give rise to trouble." Li Zuomin said: "It can't be helped now. The time to see the performance was set by the Dalai Lama himself. It's not advisable to change it. So let it be as it was agreed."

At about 7 o'clock that evening, I received a phone call from Kaloon Néusha Thubten Takpa. He said that as at 10 o'clock the following morning, the Dalai Lama was going to see the performance at the Military Area Command, all Kaloons were required to assemble in Norbu Lingka at nine o'clock to discuss how he would go and then accompany him. Because the Chief Kaloon Surkang Wangching Gelei had no telephone at home, he asked me to tell him of the arrangements.

The next morning I had to attend the political study class of the autonomous region's preparatory committee, and so I did not go directly to Norbu Lingka. Dressed in official clothes, I presided over the class while waiting for the phone call from Norbu Lingka. I wanted to see if anything would happen. Before 10 o'clock, Sampo Tsewang Rentzen, deputy commander of the Tibetan Military Area Command, local government Kaloon and commander-in-chief of the Tibetan Army, drove directly to Norbu Lingka. As he approached the park, he was

stoned and wounded and immediately was sent to the Indian consulate's clinic in Lhasa for medical attention. Sometime after 10 o'clock, Kanchung Soanamchiatso, elder brother of Pebala Choliehnamje, was killed by rebels at the gate of Norbu Lingka. Clearly, the Dalai Lama could not go to see performances in the Military Area Command, and we could not go to Norbu Lingka. I went from the preparatory committee to the Military Area Command. Thus unrolled the "March 10 Incident" of 1959. Those, however, who do not know the truth, including many monks and lay officials of the local Tibetan government, have believed the rumour spread by a few people with ulterior motives. Today, most Tibetan compatriots abroad are still ignorant of what really happened. Clearly, the harmful rumours have spread far and wide.

In accounts of this event written by some Tibetan compatriots abroad, it has been claimed that the Dalai Lama did not go to see the performance because the Military Area Command stated he should arrive unaccompanied by any officials other than his private personnel and some guards. This is simply untrue. At that time, the Dalai Lama was Tibet's leader and chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region. How could it have been possible that he would not be accompanied by officials and guards when he left his residence? As a matter of fact, the Military Area Command not only invited the Dalai Lama, but also all the Kaloons of Kasha, the Dalai Lama's two sutra teachers and some other Living Buddhas and nobles.

So why has this rumour been created? To put it bluntly, to deceive the masses and launch armed rebellion to oppose democratic reform. In fact, there was no reason to oppose the democratic reform. In 1956, Vice-Premier Chen Yi led a central government delegation to Lhasa to

attend the meeting in celebrating the establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region. At the inauguration, it was decided to prepare for democratic reform. Later, in the light of Tibet's social and political conditions, the central authorities decided that democratic reform would not be introduced for at least six years, i.e., during the Second Five-Year Plan period. Whether reform should be conducted during the Third Five-Year Plan period would be decided only when the majority of the Tibetan people and their leaders deemed it feasible. In late 1956 and early 1957, the Dalai Lama and the Bainqen Lama, at the invitation of the Indian government, went to India to take part in the activities marking the 2,500th anniversary of Sakyamuni's entrance into Nirvana. Premier Zhou Enlai, who was also in India at the time, handed a letter from Chairman Mao to the Dalai Lama, which informed him of the decision of the central authorities. The Dalai Lama then said he personally agreed with the policy of not conducting reform for six years, but since this was a matter of great importance and he was too young to decide on his own, he had to consult with the officials in his company. At the time, I was both a Kaloon in the Tibetan government and an officer of the Dalai Lama's retinue. With the other major officials, we conscientiously discussed Premier Zhou Enlai's talks with the Dalai Lama. It was agreed that from the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951, there had been no breach of the 17-article agreement reached between China's central government and the local government of Tibet. Therefore, we could offer no new opinions about work in Tibet. We said that the democratic reform conducted in the areas of Xikang, Gansu and Qinghai inhabited by Tibetans had generated some undesirable practices, which we hoped the central

authorities would conscientiously rectify. Premier Zhou Enlai accepted these opinions.

As there was no reason for launching a rebellion in Tibet, the revolt of the 1959 was utterly unjustifiable. It was caused by a handful of upper class reactionaries.

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西藏百题问答

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